

DISSERTATION

On the ORIGINAL of the

Equestrian Figure of the GEORGE

AND OF THE

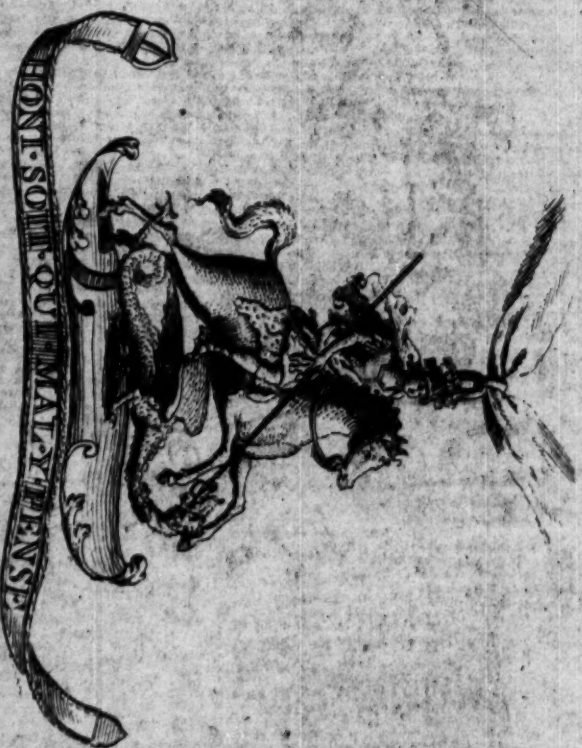
GEORGETR,

Ensigns of the Most Noble Order of that Name.

Illustrated with COPPER PLATES.

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THE QUEEN'S PALACE, ST. JAMES'S, LONDON.  
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TO THE

K I N G.

*May it please your MAJESTY,*

**T**HE following Dissertation, on the Original of the equestrian Figure of St. *George* and of the *Garter*, Ensigns of the most noble Order of that Name, begs Leave to approach your Majesty, and lay itself at your Feet.

The Subject of it bears such Relation to the most noble Order of the Garter, of which your Majesty is Sovereign, that the Propriety of addressing it to your Majesty, it is hoped, will be an Excuse for the Presumption in doing it.

But it is not on this Account only, that it beseeches your Royal Protection; it takes Courage to present itself before your Majesty from your most gracious Condescension in declaring yourself the Founder and Patron of the Society of Antiquaries of *London*, which under your Majesty's Royal Charter has been lately instituted for the Encouragement, Advancement, and Furtherance of the Study and Knowledge of the History and Antiquities of this and other Countries.



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Your Royal Ancestors, Sir, in Times of Popery put themselves, especially in their military Affairs, under the Protection of the Ensign of the Image of St. *George*, fondly supposing, from the Superstition and Error of the Times, that it derived some propitious Influences from the Saint that it related to. But in better Times your Majesty acts under a better Hope, under a well-grounded Trust in the good Providence of God, which therefore has never failed you, but in Mercy to your People, has covered your Head in the Day of Battle, and put it into your Heart to be a good as well as a great King.

That the same all wise Providence may continue to watch over and direct your Majesty in all your Counsels and Undertakings, is the Prayer of

Your Majesty's

*most dutiful Subject*

JOHN PETTINGAL,



## INTRODUCTION.

THE Enquiry into History and Antiquity has such a natural Tendency towards enlarging the Understanding, and directing aright the Operations of the Mind of Man, that it has always been looked upon as a laudable Pursuit. But when that Attention, called home from general Regards, is employed on Subjects relative to our own Country, it becomes so much the more useful and important, as a Man is more concerned for the Interests of the Community he immediately belongs to, than the more general Affairs of the World at large.

It was in this View, that our Ancestors above a Century and a half ago formed themselves into a Society for promoting the Study of the History and Antiquities of this Country; among whom we may reckon the *Parkers*, *Whitgifts*, *Camdens*, *Dugdales*, *Seldens*, *Spelmans*, and almost all the other venerable Names of that Period, who did Honour to their Country by their Writings and Literature.

But, however well designed this Plan might have been for the Purposes of promoting Learning, and such Knowledge as related to the *English* History, its Antiquities, Laws, and Constitution, yet it failed in its Effect, for want of their being connected by some closer Ties than barely those of Inclination. This was a Work reserved for his present Majesty



Majesty to shew his natural Inclinations in, for the Encouragement of Learning and learned Men; and accordingly he has been most graciously pleased to incorporate by Charter a Number of Persons, by the Name of *The Society of Antiquaries of London*, and declared himself their Patron and Founder, with the Privilege of holding Lands in Mortmain to a certain Sum. Since which Time, though little more than a Year has past, we have seen this Society honoured by the Inrollment of the Names of some of the most illustrious Personages in this Kingdom, both as to their Abilities and Stations, as Fellows and Members of this Corporation, all concurring by their Weight and Influence to countenance so useful and excellent a Design, and encourage the Study of whatever may promote the Honour and Dignity of this Nation, from the Knowledge of its Records, Customs, and all other Parts of its Antiquities.

If this Society be considered in this View, as a Set of Men who dedicate their Time and Talents for the Service of their Country, in searching after such Truths as may be of public Use when discovered; and being the Collectors and Depositaries of whatever may be curious and interesting towards the Discovery of the Original of our Laws, the Principles of our Constitution, and the Foundation of our religious and civil Establishments, they certainly must be acknowledged to be *a respectable Body*; and it is hoped, that laying aside all lesser Matters of Curiosity, every Member of that Society will direct his best Endeavours to this End, so that its Decisions may be rendered of Weight whenever there may be Occasion of its being consulted by our own Country, or those other Kingdoms that have been raised on the same Gothic Foundation with ourselves.



It is in this View of Enquiry into the *English* History, that the following Considerations on the Original of the *equestrian Figure of St. George* and the *Garter*, Ensigns of the most noble Order of that Name, are here offered to the Public. A Subject, which though it may perhaps be thought to be of no great Importance, yet as it makes a Part of the *English* History, and is distinguished by the Relation it bears to the noblest military Order in the World, both as to its Antiquity and the Dignity of its Companions, among whom are reckoned the Names of the most august Emperors, Kings, and Princes of *Europe*; and especially as it has an immediate Connection with *St. George's* Day, on which the Anniversary of the Society of Antiquaries of *London* is appointed by their Charter; for these Reasons it may seem to have a Right to the Notice of that Society, and be entitled to an Explication of such Parts of it as seem not to have been hitherto fully considered.

The Light in which it is now turned, it is to be confessed is quite new, and entirely different from that it was seen in before; but the Novelty of it, if it be otherwise well supported, I apprehend will be no Objection to it, in an Age and Country so critical and acute as this; the Characteristic of which is to be always making Advances upon the Discoveries of former Times, and like the polite and learned *Athenians* to be always inquisitive after some new Thing.

Whenever the common Road is left for new Ground, there is Danger of losing one's Way, and falling into those Errors that we endeavour to strike out new Paths to avoid; of this I am sensible, and from Appearances may expect to find the Truth of it, when I am engaged in a Pursuit, where,



where, to use the Words of *Scaliger* in his Preface, *de Emendat. Temporum*, I have neither *volam nec vestigium* to direct me, no Historian or Antiquary that can give any Help, at least in the Way that I look for it; and yet I am not without Hopes, that I can espy some glimmering Light in the utmost Distances of Antiquity, which being brought nearer our Subject will give it a new Aspect, and illustrate the dark Sides of it.

In this Persuasion, I shew that the Eastern Nations, such as the antient *Egyptians*, *Persians*, and the *Greeks* from them, described the *Malignancy of the Air purged and made wholesome by the Action of the Sun*, by the Hieroglyphic of a *Man on Horseback slaying a Serpent*; from them the *Egyptian Gnostics* or *Basilidians* used this Symbol of the Sun and its propitious Influences, as a *Device on their Amulets, in Expectation of Victory*, which seems to be described in the Design. From the *Gnostics* this Figure was adopted by the Christians of the *Romish* Communion, and being applied to their Doctrine of the Worship of Saints, was called by them *St. George*, whose spiritual Victories were so celebrated by the antient Rituals; and on which Account he became the Patron Saint of all those that were engaged in temporal or spiritual Warfare; and in this Belief it was retained in its old superstitious Use as an Amulet, being wore round the Neck, and supposed by its alexiteric Virtue to be a Protection and Defence to all that military Sodality that wore it. This *George* being an Eastern Saint it is most probable, that this Figure was first used as a military Charm at the Beginning of the *Croisades*, and thence converted into an Order by *Edward III.*; for by the way, most Institutions of Orders, in fact, were founded in the gross Errors of



of the Church of Rome, relating to the Worship of Saints, and the Efficacy of their Reliques, which were wore as Amulets; whereby they put themselves under the Protection of a Patron Saint, as the Heathens and Basilidians did under a Talisman or Charm, impressed with some Device relative to the Sun, or inscribed with the Name of a Guardian Angel. An Expression which we retain even at this Day from the Basilidian Heresy.

In order to connect these Superstitions of the Romish Church with those of the Heathens and Basilidians, here is something advanced upon the Original of Saint-Worship, as a *Succedaneum* to the Worship of Angels, and the Reliance upon their Reliques as a Shoot out of the Doctrine and Practice of Amulets; and to shew the Probability, not to say Certainty of this, we need only consider, that *the very same equestrian Figure slaying a Serpent*, which was called by the Christians St. George, and hung about the Neck of the Knights of that Order, was many hundred Years since used as an Hieroglyphic of the Sun, and wore as an Amulet under the *Gnostic* Superstition, for *Protection and Victory*; for which Purpose I presume the Use of the George also was designed, for it cannot be contended for as a bare unmeaning Ornament, when it had so many speaking Circumstances about it.

Should it be asked, where is the Necessity of departing from the common Opinion, that this is the Image of St. George, by whose Name it is called? The Answer is ready, because there does not appear any sufficient Grounds to believe that there ever was such a Person, except it be supposed to relate to the *Arian* of that Name; and then there is no Reason to be given, why the orthodox western Church

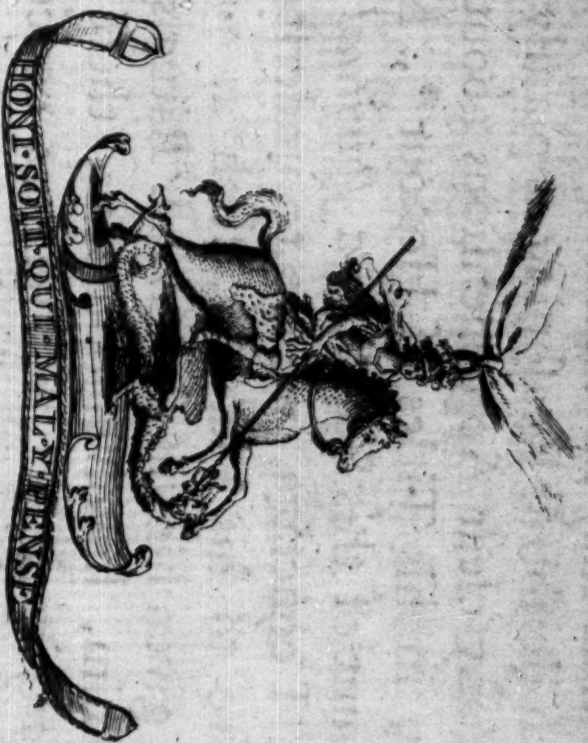


( x )

Should be so inconsistent with itself, as to shew such distinguished Honours to the Memory of a Person whom they reckoned amongst the most pestilent Heretics. The Reality of his Existence therefore being more than problematic, we may be justified in casting about for another Signification of that Figure more agreeable to Truth, and more consistent in all its Parts. With what Success this Enquiry has been made is submitted with great Deference to the Reader's Judgment.

The same Hypothesis is pursued with Respect to the *Garter*, which with its Inscription, is considered as a *Ligature*, and Part of the same telefnatical Apparatus with the equestrian Figure of the *George*; the Signification of which we shall now proceed to examine.





A

# DISSERTATION

## ON THE

### Original of the Figure of St. GEORGE, and of the GARTER.



HE Original of the Figure of *St. George* on Horseback spearing a Serpent, appendent to the Collar of the most noble Order, is a Circumstance that neither our Historians or Antiquaries have shewed much Attention to.

Some that have wrote of the Order professedly, have taken no Notice at all of it; and others, who thought it ought not to be passed over in Silence, have touched upon

B

it



it so lightly, that they have offered only a slender Conjecture, and such doubtful Reasoning as plainly discovers, that they had not any clear Apprehensions about it.

Mr. Selden, in his Titles of Honour \*, has given a very learned Account of this Saint, as a *Spiritual Warrior*; and in this Sense, I conceive, we are to understand all those Epithets relative to his Victories, such as *τετρακτορος*, *μυρηνικος*, and *πονομαχος*, given him in the *Greeks* Rituals: Because in all Accounts of him, however pompous, there is not the least Mention of any real Action, he was concerned in; and these Appellations seem to be in the same Style with the *bold and noble Army of Martyrs*, which we read of in the Hymn of St. Ambrose, and elsewhere †.

However, when he comes to speak of the equestrian Figure of the Saint, he says no more, than, that no *after one could be made of him, being supposed a Soldier and a Commander*; and as to the Dragon, it was much the same Symbol that *Constantine* made use of on his Coins, to signify the Devil; the Conquest over whom, by the Light of the Gospel, in his Time, he expressed, by his Figure treading on a Serpent.

*Baronius* likewise, in his Martyrology ‡, seems to assign the same Reason for this equestrian Figure of St. George: *Non minus inscius, says he, S. Georgium ut equestris militie militem, equestri imagine referri consuevit. But it does not any where appear, that St. George had any particular Command in the Cavalry; nor is there any Reason to be given, why a Soldier should be represented rather on a Horse, Horse,*

\* Selden Tit. Honour, p. 818. §. 44. Folio, 2d Edit. London, 1631.

† To αὐτῶν τετρακτορος τῶν Μαρτύρων

‡ Baron. Martyrol. Roman. ad 23 April.



Horse, than on Foot; on the contrary it is evident, that the Victories of Christianity over Paganism, in the Time of *Constantine*, and the Triumphs of the Gospel over the Devil, from whence *Selden* suggests, that the Device of the Dragon was taken, were always represented on Medals, by the Emperors on Foot, treading on a Serpent, as on that of *Constantine* abovementioned, and this of *Majorianus* :



And in the Gold Coin of our *Henry's*, called *Angels*, we see an Angel on Foot, encountering a Dragon, or Serpent lying under him. The equestrian Figure of *St. George* therefore, bore no Relation to his Victories as a Soldier, or Martyr, seeing Devices of that Kind were expressed in a different Style. As this of Mr. *Selden* is the only Attempt I know of, towards accounting for the Meaning and Propriety of this Figure applied to *St. George*, and his Conjecture not being satisfactory, I have taken the Liberty to offer some Considerations that have occurred to me on this Subject; and which perhaps may bring us somewhat nearer the Truth, in an Enquiry, that at first Sight, does not seem very interesting, but which will be found to lead us into some curious Recesses of Antiquity; from which new



Lights will be drawn, to illustrate the Subject of the following Papers.

It is most probable, that the first Shape of Idolatry in the World, was the Worship of the Sun, to which Mankind were led, by all the Motives that could work upon their Hopes, and by all the Incitements that could flow from Beauty and Beneficence.

They observed, there was not a Plant, nor an Animal, but what was cherished by its Influence; the Earth was made fertile by its Warmth, and the Heavens adorned with its singular Brightness and Distinction; and beyond all this, they found themselves chiefly affected by it, in the Pleasures and Enjoyments that the whole World supplied them with; that it was from hence they derived Light, and Health, and Cheerfulness, and were delivered from all the noxious Qualities of the Earth, and the poisonous Vapours of the Air. Whether, therefore, the Sun was considered in its Nature and Appearances, or felt in its Consequences and Effects. It was too remarkable to pass in its daily Courses unobserved. The Benefits received from it were so manifest, so continual, and so interesting, that it was next to impossible not to pay a Veneration to what seemed the most distinguished, most beneficial, most beautiful Being in the Universe. Hence in all their Emergencies, the first Idolaters looked up to the Sun, as the Object of Devotion, and described this Deity to themselves, according to those several Shapes, by which they seemed to be more particularly affected.

The seeming Velocity in its daily Revolutions, which produced such a quick Succession of Light and Darknels, was a Circumstance that from being constantly observed, made



made great Impressions upon them, and which the *Aegyptians*, who were the most enlightened Heathens of that Time, described in their hieroglyphic Language, by a Star with a large Pair of Wings \*, as occurs often in the *Tabula Isaica*, thus.



The ancient *Persians* likewise, who had their Name from their *Employment about Horses, Paras, or Persa*, <sup>¶</sup> signifying a *Horseman*, in Token of this Velocity of the Sun, sacrificed a Horse to it, the *swiftest of Animals* to the *swiftest of the Gods*, as *Herodotus* tells us <sup>†</sup>. In Process of Time these two Symbols came to be joined together, and the Sun was represented sometimes under the Figure of a winged Man on Horseback, as in No. 2. Tab. I. of

\* *Alæ Velocitatis Index et Nota*, Pignorius in *Mensa Isaica*, Content. Tab. III. *Alæ Solis Cursus Velocitatem denotant*, Montfaucon, Pag. 367, ad Tab. CLXII. *Soli accipiter dicatus erat propter Motus Velocitatem*, Pierius Val. in Hieroglyph. p. 426. B.

† Ταχυστατον Σειω παρ' ἡλίου τω ταχυστω δατεωλαί, *Herodot.* in *Aio-Placat equo Persis radiis Hyperiona cinctum*  
Ne detur celeri victima tarda Deo. *Ovid.*



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of the Abraxas of *Chifflet*, thus \* :



And from hence quoted by *Montfaucon*, Plate 157 + ; sometimes by a Horseman with a radiated Head, striking with a Spear, as on a Medal in *Agostini*, thus ||.



This

\* *Chifflet* Dissertatio in *Macarii Archiepiscopi*, 4to. Antwerp, 1567.

+ *Montfaucon*, *Antiquité expliquée*.

|| *Dialoghi di Antonio Agostini sopra le Medaglie Inscrizione, ed altra Antichità*, Edit. Roma, 1736, Dial. quinto, p. 147.



This Medall, supposed hitherto to be one of the *Tarentines*\*, is undoubtedly nothing more than a *Basilidian* Amulet or Abraxas; which was wore for Protection against Tempests. This plainly appears, from the next Figure to it holding a Shield, on which is inscribed *Castor*, the certain Mark of an Abraxas, and on the Reverse, *Castor* and *Polux*, as Stars propitious to Sailors, as *Horace* intimates, when he calls them *lucida Sidera* and *alba Nautis Stella* †. Hence it was that the *Egyptians*, in the Times of the *Cæsars*, used this Figure at the Head or Stern of their Ships, as we read in the *Acts* xxviii. 11, where a Ship of *Alexandria* is said to have *Castor* and *Polux* for its Sign, *τοῦτο σημεῖον*; that is, they used that Figure as an Amulet, because those Gods were supposed to be tutelars to Sailors, and Guardians of them from Tempests. *Gaffarelli*, in his *Curiositates inaudite*, makes this Observation on it, that *eorum exemplo Christiani Sanctorum imagines, in navibus collocaverunt*, a Remark that it will be proper to remember, when we come to shew, that the Worship of Saints and their Images was derived from the Persuasion of the Efficacy of Amulets among the Heathens. The Legend *ΖΗΝΕΙΣΜ*, is one of those unintelligible Words that these Impositors made use of to astonish the Vulgar; as will be seen more at large hereafter.

As the Dolphin on one Side implied a Tempest, which they were supposed to foretell when they swam about the Ships;

\* *Le Medaglie de i Tarentini*, Agostini Dial. I. p. 13.

† *Iao qui dat Fugam Malorum significat*, Iræneus Lib. II. cap. 67.

‖

*Quorum simul alba Nautis*

*Stella refulsit,*

*Defluit Saxis agitatus Humor,*

*Concidunt venti, fugiuntque Nubes,*

*Et minax quod sic volvere ponto*

*Unda recumbit.*

*Horat. Ode 12, Lib. I.*



Ships; so on the Reverse, a Man on Horseback with a Spear in his Hand and a Nimbus round his Head, signified the Sun, whose Appearance was to disperse and allay it. According to *Virgil*,

*Tumida equora placat,*

*Collectasque fugat nubes, solenque reducit. Æn. l. 146.*

This Medal or Amulet, marked with the Word *TAPAS*, alluded to the Name of the fabulous Founder of the *Tarantines* and Son of *Neptune*; all which relates to the Occupation of these People, who being Mariners were exposed to Tempests; and therefore this Hieroglyphic of the Sun was very proper to be the Device upon an Amulet that was calculated to be a *Defence against the Danger Sea-sailing Men were exposed to.*

But besides those Representations of the Sun by a *Horseman*, with and without *Wings*, we find the two Symbols of *Wings* and a *Horse* joined together with the same Signification in the Story of *Bellerophon* slaying the Chimera, as in this Intaglio in *Agostini*\*, on a Medal of the *Syracusians*, a *Corinthian Colony*†; and the Story of *Perseus* and *Medusa* in the following Design ‡.

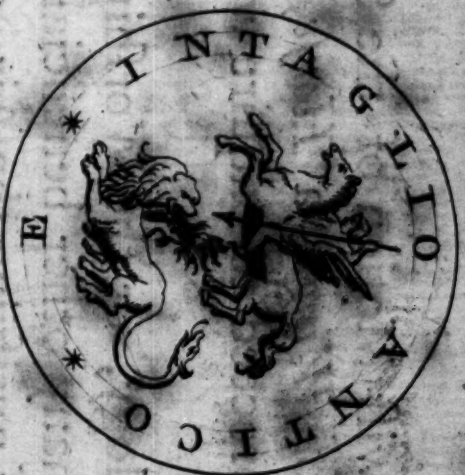
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\* *Agostini* Lial. V. pag. 150.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, pag. 151.





All which were only hieroglyphical Representations of the benign Influences and salutary Effects of the Sun in its Courses, as will hereafter appear.

This Rapidity of the Sun's Motion, thus expressed by the Symbols of *Wings* and a *Horse*, is finely represented in the *Psalms*, where it is described as rising in all its Glory, and coming like a Bridegroom out of his Chamber, and rejoicing as a *Giant* to run his Course; from which Eastern Image of a *Giant*, implying the Rapidity of the Sun's sup-  
posed Motion, that nothing could stop or interrupt, the *Romans*, I conceive, borrowed their *Deo Soli invicto Mi-  
thrae*, or *Soli invicto comiti*, as on the Medals of *Constan-  
tine* and others; where *invicto* seems to stand for the same  
C  
Idea,



Idea, that is signified by the *Giant*, or גיב׳, *Gibbor* of the *Hebrews*.

Thus far we have seen the swift Motion of the Sun expressed by the Hieroglyphic of *Wings*, a *Horse*, and a *winged Horse*; we will now proceed to enquire what was meant by the *Rider*.

In the Eastern Sabaical Theology, or the Worship of the heavenly Bodies, among the many other beneficial Qualities ascribed to the Sun, that of purifying the Air, and dispelling the noxious Vapours that arose from the Earth, was esteemed one of the principal; especially by the *Egyptians*, who, from the Overflowings of the *Nile*, were exposed to the unwholesome Exhalations that rose from that marshy Situation, and ever depended upon the Sun to dispense them.

The Hieroglyphic, by which they expressed this Benefit from the Action of the Sun on the unwholesome Parts of the Earth and Air, was the Figure of a Man on a winged Horse, striking with a Spear a three-headed Monster; by which was signified the various Inconveniences and many Disorders arising to Mankind from the Intemperature and Grossness of the Air, and which were subdued as it were, and dissipated by the Spear of the Man on Horseback, i. e. the Beams of the Sun; this was called in the hieroglyphic Language *Bellerophon* and *Chimera*, (which though it be found also in the Grecian Mythology) yet by the original Name of *Bellerophon* and *Chimera*, it appears, that this was

\* *Alatus equus Soli attribuitur; nam in Galleni nummi alatus equus est cum inscriptione, Soli. Coel. Aug. Plenius Valent. Hieroglyphic. Lib. IV. Equus.*

+ Hence *Typhon*, the Principle of Evil, under the Figure of a Serpent, is called by *Pindar*, *Pyth. Ode I. Τὸς ἐκαστὸν ἄνθρωπον*, *Typhon centiceps*, or with an hundred Heads.



was originally the Growth of *Aegypti*. For *Bellerophon* in the Eastern Language signifies *Deus sanans*, נבדן בן 2, *Baal* or *Bel ropbe*, the God of Healing \*, where we may observe by the bye, that *Bel* was also a proper Name of the *Sun*, given it from being the supreme Deity in the Sabaical Worship of the heavenly Bodies; and *Chimera* was so called from *van*, *Chamar*, *luto sum esse*, boggy, marshy; so that we see how very properly the Action of the Sun on an humid vapourish Air, by which it became wholesome and healthy, was painted by them, under the Figure which they called *Bellerophon* slaying the *Chimera*: From hence it passed into the *Grecian Asia*; and the Country where they placed this Fable was in the maritime Parts of *Lycia*, which being marshy and near the Sea, might well be assigned by Mythology as the Den of the *Chimera*, according to the Etymology of that Word just mentioned.

I am aware that *Bochart* and the ingenious Author of *L'Histoire du Ciel* have given Interpretations of the *Chimera* different from this, as well as from each other; but that it signified the various *Evils* that arise from the Intemperature of the Air and other Causes, we may understand from the Use that is made of this Figure on the Reverse of a Medal of *Alexander Severus* in *Angeloni* †; by which we are to learn, that as *Bellerophon* subdued the various Monsters that composed the *Chimera*, that is, the Sun purged the Air of its various evil Qualities, and thereby gave Health to the World; so *Alexander Severus*, by suppressing

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and

\* *Apollo Medice, Apollo Pean, vesales virgines ita indignant. Solis duo maxime effectus; alter quo calore temperato juvat mortaliū vitam, alter quo jasū radiarum pestiferum citius immittit; inde Apollo vocatur ἰατρίᾳ ἑσπέρῳ, ἑστὶν ὁ ἀπὸ ἡσπέρου salvando.* Macrobi. Saturnal. Lib. I.

† Medal. Angeloni, p. 230. No. VI.



and triumphing over the *great Variety of Vice* in his Reign, brought Happiness to Mankind. Of the same Kind with *Bellerophon* and *Chimera* was the *Persus* on a winged Horse, cutting off *Medusa's* Head surrounded with Serpents; for *Persus*, from *πρῶς*, *Peres*, a Horseman, signified the Sun, and the Head of *Medusa* encompassed with Serpents implied the Malignancy of the Air, that was an Enemy to the *Thrashing-Floor*, for so *πρωτο*, *Medusa*, signifies.

The salutary Qualities of the Sun, and the Hieroglyphic of Wings, by which its rapid Motion was expressed, seem to have been Images familiar to the Heathen Idolaters, and as such are alluded to by the Prophet *Malachi*, Ch. iv. ver. 2. *But unto you, that fear my Name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with Healing under his Wings.* In this Passage the Prophet promises the Coming of Christ, as a Blessing to those that would fear him, and return from Idolatry; and whereas the *Sun* was the great Object of Worship, on Account of his benign Influence on the Universe, so he promises those that would forsake that Worship, that the *Sun* should still arise upon them, not the *natural Sun* in the Heavens, but the *Sun of Righteousness*, which should appear with more advantageous Circumstances, and with such kind of *Healing under his Wings*, as would far exceed the Effects of the natural Sun, *i. e.* with more substantial Blessings than they could experience from the most benign Influences of the Luminary in the Heavens. I think I need not be particular in pointing out how exactly these Images in the Prophet correspond with the abovementioned Opinions and hieroglyphic Paintings of the Antients.

When the Sabaical Religion spread farther into the Western World, the Eastern Hieroglyphics, not being understood in their



their original Sense, became the Mother of Mythology; and the *Greeks* made a second Story of their own, for every Representation, the original hidden Meaning of which they understood not; the salutary Influences of the Sun they acknowledged and adored, but instead of keeping to the Figure of *Bellerophon* and *Chimera* in the *Ægyptian* Sense, they signified the same Ideas by an Hieroglyphic of their own, which they called *Apollo* killing the *Serpent Pythion*; which however different in Name and some few other Circumstances, yet upon the whole, appears to be in the same Style, and of the same Signification with the former.

I don't recollect any physical Explication of this Fable given us by the *Greeks*; *Plutarch* indeed mentions the Combate of *Apollo* and *Pythion* in *J. & Ofride*, but does not tell us what was meant by it. And *Homer*, in the Hymn to *Apollo*, gives this Reason of his Name *Pythios*:

Πύθιον καλέσσω ἐπὶ Πυθίωνι, βυερεά κελσι  
 Αὐτὸς πύρε θελὼν πυθὼν ὄρεσσι μέλαινο.

*Hi autem Regem*

*Pythium vocant cognomine, quoniam illic  
 Putrefecit monstrum vis acuti Solis.*

Let us therefore hear the Explication that *Macrobius* gives of it, *Saturnal. Lib. I. cap. 17. Hinc est quod attribuitur eidem medendi potestas, quia temperatus Solis calor morborum omnium fuga est . . . . virtutem igitur Solis quæ curationi præest Apollinem vocaverunt.* Again, *divino fervore radiorum veluti sagittis incidentibus, extenuata, exsiccata, enecata exhalatio interempti Draconis ab Apolline fabulam fecit.* This Fable, therefore, of *Apollo* killing the *Pythion*,  
 thus



thus physically explained, signifies no more than the Efficacy of the Rays of the Sun in purging the Air, and dispersing, and as it were *destroying the noxious Exhalations*. From whence we may observe, First, that this *Quality of Healing*, ascribed in this Sense to the Sun by the *Latin Physiologists*, is a notable Proof how aptly the Name of *Bellerophon*, or the *God of Healing*, was given to the Sun in the hieroglyphical Figure of that Name; Secondly, that as the Dragon *Pytho* signified only the Exhalations that were dispersed by the purifying Rays of the Sun, so the *Chimera*, one Part of which Monster was a Serpent, physically implied the same Cause of Distemper and Infection that was chased away by the Spear of *Bellerophon*, i. e. the Rays of the Sun. This Purgation of the Air from Infection and Distemper is what was expressed by that Hieroglyphic that was painted at *Hermopolis*, where a Hawk, the Emblem of the Sun, pounces a Serpent which he seizes in his Beak and Talons: The Figure of which may be seen in *Pierius Hieroglyph.* 206. D. The Explication he gives is, that it signified *Typhon* overcome by *Osiris*, i. e. the good Principle prevailing over the evil one, the Sun over the Intemperature of the Earth and Air. We are to observe likewise, that the *Pytho*, or what *Macrobius* calls *Draco*, was so called from *Perben*, which in the Oriental Language signifies a *Serpent*. Hence *Ovid* describes *Apollo* killing *Pytho* as a *Serpent*:

*Mille quidem fudit telis & pluribus hydram.*

So that we find in all these hieroglyphical Representations of *Bellerophon* and *Chimera*, *Perseus* and *Medusa*, *Apollo* and *Pytho*, the Inclemencies of the Air and noxious Exhalations



halations were exprest by a *Serpent*; and the Activity of the Sun on this lower World, by means of which the Air is rendered wholesome and temperate, by a *Man on a winged Horse slaying this Serpent*.

Now the Antients came to represent *Evil* by the Symbol of a *Serpent*, I suppose may be accounted for from the ancient Traditions preserved in the Books of *Moses*, of a Serpent being the Introducer of Evil into the World \*, or if that should not be admitted as the Original of using this Hieroglyphic by the Heathens, it might have taken its Rise from the noxious Quality of Serpents, to which Creature Mankind entertain the greatest Antipathy and Aversion: And as such it may be a very proper Hieroglyphic of *Evil*. But whatever Reason it was owing to, we certainly meet very frequently in the Antients with the symbolical Representation of *Evil* by the Figure of a Serpent. *Pierius* tells us, that *Diodorus Siculus per Serpentem voluminibus implicatum malum interpretatur* †; and it was upon this Account, that the Furies, or *Erumenides*, were painted with Serpents hissing from their Head, instead of Hair. The Giants also, by which was meant in Mythology that rebellious Principle of Evil that always opposed and obstructed the Operations of Good, were described with their lower Parts of a serpentine Nature, as *Ovid* saith,

*Cum centum quisque parabat  
Injicere anguipedum capivo brachia caelo.*

And in the *Aetna*, falsely ascribed to *Virgil*,

*His*

\* See the second Dissertation of the Lord Bishop of London, annexed to the Use and Intent of Prophecy.

† *Pier. Val. Hieroglyph.* p. 118. voc. Gigant.



*His natura sua est alto ténus, ima per orbes  
Squammeus intortos sinuat vestigia serpens.*

But this symbolical Description of Evil in the Western Mythology owed its Original, I conceive, to the hieroglyphical Representation of Evil among the *Egyptians*, by whom the Principle of Good was called *Osiris*, and the Principle of Evil *Typhon*; which Word in *Coptic* (according to the learned *William Baxter*) signifies a *Serpent*, and was the Hieroglyphic for an *Enemy*; and this agrees with the Observation of several learned Men \*, that *Typhon* was no other than a Transposition of the Letters in the Word *Pythen*, which in *Hebrew* signifies an *Asp* or *Serpent*. Thus *Typhon*, who was thrust down to *Tartarus* as a Rebel against the Gods, <sup>Σειὺν ποταμῆος,</sup> was described by *Pindar* as a *Serpent*, <sup>εἰπέλιον</sup> †; and *Strabo*, Lib. xvi. says, that some supposed *Typhon* not to be a Man, but a *Serpent*; of which more may be seen in the Mythology of *Natalis Comes*, and *Noel le Comte*. Having thus seen how *Typhon* was generally conceived under the Figure of a *Serpent* ‡, let us take a View of what was meant

\* Quoniam Serpens vel Aspis Hebraicè Petben, פֶּתֶבֶן, dicitur binc τυφών, vocabulo ad Hebraicam vocem confecto. Delph. Phœnicizantes, autore Ed. Dickinsono.

‡ Typhon ainsi nommé pour la transposition de deux lettres, pour ressembler le naturel de Python tres bideux & tres epouvantable Serpent. Mythologie, par Noel le Comte, Liv. VI. p. 670,

†

ὤς ἐν αἰνῇ τὰ ἐλάργα κεί  
-ται Σειὺν ποταμῆι

Τυφῶς ἐκάλοντασαν

.....

Κείνο δ' Ἀφαιστῶιο κέντρος ἐπέλιον  
Δεινολάλῃς ἀναπείλαται.

Pindar, Pyth. Ode I,

‡ Manilius Astronomicen, Lib. IV. cælis lim a ignipedem Typhona.



under that Name in the Egyptian Theology, as it is given us by Plutarch in the Treatise of Isis and Osiris. In the first Place, he is described as moved with Envy and Malice, and perpetrating the most wicked and horrible Things, putting all Things into Confusion, and filling both Land and Sea with infinite Calamities and Evils \*. Again he says, in Opposition to those that thought that only one Appearance of Evil was called Typhon, it is not Drought, nor Wind, nor Sea, nor Darkness alone, but every Part of Nature that is hurtful or destructive belongs to Typhon †. In another Place, whatsoever in the Course of the World is of a regular, fixed, and sound Constitution is the Efflux of Osiris, or the good Principle; but the passionate, titanic, irrational, and brutal Part of the Soul is Typhon; and what in the corporeal Nature is adventitious, morbid, and tumultuous, as irregular Seasons, Distempers of Air, Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, are the Devastations of Typhon ‖. Again, all bad and noxious Things, whether Animals, Plants, or Passions, were supposed to be the Works, and Members, and Motions of Typhon §; and whatsoever in the Course of Nature was intemperate or disorderly, through any Excess or Defect, was ascribed to Typhon \*\*.

D.

Thus

\* . . . . . δεινὰ μὲν ἀπο Φθονὸς καὶ διουμανείας ἐπιλασάτο, καὶ πάντα παραμυαία ταραχὰς ἐνέπλησε καὶ οὐκ ἔτι τὰς παύσας καὶ θαλάσσης. Plutarch. de Isid. & Osiride, Edit. Steph. P. 644.

† . . . . . ὅ γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνεμῶν καὶ θαλάσσης καὶ σφοδρὰ ἀλλὰ πάντων οὐκ ἢ Φύσις βλαβεροῦ καὶ φθαρτικοῦ ἐχέει μορίου τὰ Τυφών. Ibid. 657.

‖ . . . . . Τυφὼν δὲ, τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ παθητικόν, καὶ τιτανικόν, καὶ ἀλόγον, καὶ ἐμπληκτικόν τὰ δὲ λογιστικὰ τὸ ἐπικτητικόν, καὶ νοσώδες, καὶ ταρακτικόν ἀβρίαις, καὶ δυσχερασίαις, καὶ χερύσειν ἡλίου, καὶ ἀφαιρούμεναις ζέωντος, οὐκ ἐκδέχεται καὶ τιφῶν. Ibid. 661.

§. πάντα καὶ ζῶα, καὶ φῦλα, καὶ πάθη τὰ φαντά, καὶ βλαβερά, τυφῶν. ἐστὶν, καὶ μέγ, καὶ χυμώα. Ibid. 662.

\*\* . . . . . ἀπλῶς οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀμείλιχον καὶ ἀναιμιόν ὑπερβολαίς ἢ ἐνδείαις Τυφῶνι περιεμμενόμενον. Ibid. 671.



Thus the *Egyptians* described by *Typhon*, by which, as we have seen above, was understood a *great Serpent*, all Manner of Evil that prevailed in the World to the Disturbance of Mankind, in the Diminution of Beauty, Order, and Happiness; and among the rest, *this*, that we have particularly taken notice of, the *Dissempérature of the Air*, which Circumstance is also ascribed to *Typhon* in the Mythology of *Le Comte* \*. It appears from hence, without multiplying Authorities, which are very frequent in antient Mythology, *that Evil in general, and the Intemperature of the Air in particular in the Argument before us, was very properly expressed by the Figure of a Serpent.*

We have thus traced this Figure through the Theology of the *Egyptians*, *Greeks*, and *Latins*, and shewn what was principally intended by the hieroglyphic Device of a Man on Horseback slaying a Serpent or Dragon. We shall proceed now into the Theology of the *Basilidians*, who from their Master *Basilides*, an *Alexandrian*, in the Reign of *Adrian* affected to form a Religion out of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity; in which Medley, the heathenish Sabaical Culte of the Sun was the principal Part, and the several Shreds of Judaism and Christianity tacked to it, served to amuse and impose upon those, to whom they desired to recommend themselves under either of those Persuasions, according as the Person they sought to gain was inclined to either one or the other Religion. They were in fact Heathens that had laid a Plan for making themselves important and Leaders of a Sect; and to this Purpose professed Magic and mysterious Language, in order to succeed better on  
weak

\* *Les autres prennent Typhon pour une qualité d'air pestifentielle. Le Comte Mythol. Lib. VI. p. 671.*



weak and curious Minds \*. As they were originally of *Egypt*, they retained after the Culte of their Country, the Sun as their supreme Deity, and on their Charms or Amulets, which was the most profitable, and therefore the most regarded Part of their Religion, they engraved all the monstrous Variety of *Egyptian* Deities, with *Jewish*, *Greek*, and barbarous Inscriptions; barbarous, both with Respect to the Language and Character. To these they gave a mysterious Name of their own forming, and called them *Abraxas*. The Use of them was, that being wore on any Part of the Body, by the Influence and Protection of the Sun, under which they were consecrated, and with whose Symbols they were engraven, they had Power to *cure Diseases*, *avert Danger*, *procure Victory*, and in short, were supposed efficacious against *all the Accidents, Infirmities, or Evils of human Life*. These Amulets, thus fabricated with either Symbols or Inscriptions relative to the Sun, they inscribed with its Name in *Hebrew*, *Shemesh*; *Phre*, in *Persic*; *☉*, in *Greek*; as may be seen at large in *Cbiffetius's* Dissertation on the *Abraxas* †, and *Montfaucon* ‥. And lest any divine Energy might be wanting to compleat the Virtue of these Amulets, they often inscribed them with *Iaa*,  
D 2  
for

\* *Utuntur imaginibus, incantationibus & invocationibus.* Irenæus de Saturnino & Gnosticis.

*Hebraica nomina supersunt ut supiori sint vel perterreant eos qui sacrantur.* Sic. *Basyma eacabasa eana irrawissa, dyarbada, caetaba sobor camelentibi.* Iren. Lib. I. c. 18.

*Barbaro simplices quoque terrentes sono, ut quod non intelligent, plus mirentur.* Hieron. Epist. XXIX. ad Theodoram.

† *Macarii Apistopist. cum Commentar. Joan. Chiffletii, &c.* 4to. Antwerp, 1658.

‡ *Montfaucon Antiq. Expliq.* Tom. II. Part 2. particularly, Plate 162. p. 368, where the Sun is represented by a Man with two, four, and six Wings, to denote its rapid Motion.



for *Jehovah*, *Adonai*, *Solomon Sabao*, and other venerable Names in the *Jewish* Theology; as in *Montfaucon*, Plate 164, in old *Greek* Characters, *Ἰαὼ Ἀβραχὰς ἀδωναὶ αἰὼν ὀνομα, δεικναι δυνάμεις, Φυλακὴν Οὐρανίου ἀπὸ παντὸς καὶ πάντων*, *Iao, Abraxas, Adonai, holy Name, propitious Powers, keep Vibia Paulina from every evil Demon*. And in another, Plate 147. No. 1. the Sun is represented by the Emblem of a Cock's Head, and on the Reverse, *Δος μοι χάριν καὶ νίκην, give me Favour and Victory*. And on another, Plate 166. No. 1. *νίκας Ἰω, Isis thou hast conquered*. In Plate 167. they had recourse to Christianity, as appears by one of their Amulets, which in Front has the radiated Head of a Man and a Whip implying the Sun, and on the Reverse, *ΕΙCΥΥC ΧΡΕCΤΥC FАВRIE ANANIE AME, Jesus Christus Gabriel Anania Amen*. In this and other Inscriptions, besides the Name of *Jesus Christ*, it is to be observed, that they made use of the Names of Angels known under the *Jewish* and *Christian* Dispensation, as *Michael*, *Gabriel*, *Raphael*; but besides these, the better to carry on their Imposture and amaze the Vulgar, they invented other barbarous Names of Angels, such as *Ananiel*, *Jasuel*, *Proserael*, *Cusiel*, and a thousand others of the same Jargon; a List of which may be seen in *Montfaucon*, P. 337. Part II.

These were Names they gave to their supposed *δυνάμεις, or propitious Powers*, from whom they hoped for Protection, as appears by the Words *φυλακὴν διαφυλασσέ, and such like*, and were undoubtedly the *Angelorum potentium nomina ex adytis Aegyptiorum* that are mentioned by *Arnobius* \*. This Recourse for Protection and Defence to Angels, with whose Names they inscribed their Amulets, is a direct Consequence of

\* *Arnobius*, Lib. I. cap. 22. *adv. Gentes*.



of one of their main Principles, which was, that the World was made by Angels, and particularly Man \* ; therefore nothing could be more natural, according to their Doctrine, than to apply to those Angels for Help and Protection in all Cases, to whom they ascribed their very Being and Creation; and it is observable that it is from this Sect, that we retain the Expression of a *Guardian Angel* to this Day.

It is very probable, that this Superstition brought into the West by *Marcus*†, a Disciple of *Basilides*, continued to infect Christianity much longer than Histories take notice of; because in a Council held at *Rome* by Pope *Zachary*, *an.* 745, it was forbid to give any other Names to Angels than these three, *Michael*, *Gabriel*, and *Raphael*. And the Emperor *Charles* the Great, in his Capitularies, ordains, *ut ignota Angelorum nomina, nec fingantur nec nominantur, ni illorum quos habemus in auctoritate habent Michael, Gabriel, Raphael.*

It seems from hence, that the Multitude of fictitious Angels encreased to such an Excess, as that it became necessary to prohibit, by Law, any Acknowledgement, or Names of any other than those three that are mentioned in the Scriptures and the Apocrypha; and what was this Usage here guarded against both by the Decrees of a Council as Herey, and the imperial Laws as a Nuisance to Society, but these superstitious Practices of the *Basilidians*, who in consequence of their first Principle, ‘ That the World was created

\* *A septem angelis mundum factum, & omnia que in eo. Hominem autem angelorum esse facturam.* Irenæus, c. 22. & passim.

† *Refert Irenæus cir. apostolicorum temporum & Papiæ auditoris evangelicæ Joannis discipulus Episcopus Lugdunensis; quod Marcus quidam de Basilidis Gnostici stirpe descendens, primum ad Gallias venerit, & eas partes per quas Rhodanus & Garumna fluunt, sua doctrina maculaverit.* Hieron. Epist. 29. ad Theodoram.



created by Angels,' put all Events attendant on human Life, under the Guidance and Direction of separate Angels, to whom they gave barbarous Names \*, according to their own Fancy and Imagination, and thereby propagated that Gnostic Doctrine condemned by St. Paul to the *Colossians*, c. ii. 18. when he warns them to take heed of Deceivers, who would come to them under a *voluntary* + *Humility*, and *worshipping of Angels*.<sup>2</sup>

By this time I expect the Reader to be tired with a Detail that may seem at first Sight perhaps very little to the Purpose; but it will not be found so foreign to our Subject, if it be considered, that as these People were originally *Ægyptians*, and engraved the Hieroglyphics of their antient Theology on their Amulets, it is necessary to premise this short History of them, in order to shew the Continuation of the Figure of a *Horseman slaying a Serpent*, as a Symbol of the Sun and its victorious Influences on Infection and Dissemper, on their Amulets or Abraxas; and likewise to account for its passing thence into the Idolatry of the Church of *Rome*.

To this Purpose then, we see the following Amulet or Abraxas in *Montfaucon*, Plate 173. No. 3.



The

• *Utuntur imaginibus & invocationibus & reliqua universa parerga; nomina quoque quaedam assignentes quasi angelorum.* Iren. lib. i. c. 23.

+ *Ab animalibus abstinens, perfecta hujusmodi abstinentia seducens multos.* Iren. lib. i. c. 22.





The Device on which, is a Horseman slaying with a Spear a Serpent that lies under him, with the Letters *IAI* on one Side, which I take to be a Corruption of the Word *IAO*, the Sun, which on the other Side is described by a Star of six Points, from whence these Abraxas were called *Soles Basilidani*.

The Meaning of this Device was, that as the Sun in this Symbol subdued Distempers and Diseases that arose from noxious Qualities in the Air, so the Wearer of this Amulet should, under the Protection of the great Deity, the *Sun*\*, be able in like Manner to triumph over his Enemies: From whence it appears, that this was a *Talisman* for *Victory*; for which end it was customary to wear them, as is evident from the Inscriptions *Θεοι Χαρις και νικη*, *Grant me Favour and Victory*, and *Nixas Iovis*, above mentioned.

That this was an Amulet of the *Basilidians* seems to be beyond Doubt, from the Mixture of Paganism and Christianity

\* Solis sigillum existimabatur hominem facere sapientem, gravem, fortem, victorem hostium, &c. Strozzi Cicogna de potentia Planetarum.



stianity in it; for though the salutary Influence of the Sun is expressed by a heathen Symbol, yet there is an evident Mark of Christianity, in the Cross on the Top of the Spear, implying, that Victory was to be obtained under the Sign of the Cross, as well as under the Protection of the Sun: But to reconcile these two different Views in one and the same Device, it must be remembered what has been observed already, that the Authors of this monstrous Religion affected to make it a Compound of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity. That this is certainly an *Abraxas* may be depended upon; and the Circumstance of the Cross on the Top of the Spear entirely Christian, we may gather from a like Figure on the Reverse of a Medal of *Majorianus*, where the Emperor treads upon a Serpent, and his Spear has the Form of a Cross on the Top of it, with Victory in his left Hand crowning him, and the Legend *Victoria Augg.* \*, by which is meant the Victory of Christianity in his Time. From hence we may see by the bye the Original of the Hilt of Swords being made in antient Times in the Form of a Cross, a Proof of which Custom occurs in the Account of the Ceremony of a King of *Spain's* knighting himself with a Sword *made after the Form of a Cross* †. By which seems to be signified, that Victory was to be hoped for by the Wearer of that Sword, under the Influence of the Cross, in the same Manner as it was promised to *Constantine* by the miraculous Inscription on it, *ΕΥ ΤΕΤΩ ΝΙΚΑ, by means of this Cross you shall conquer.*

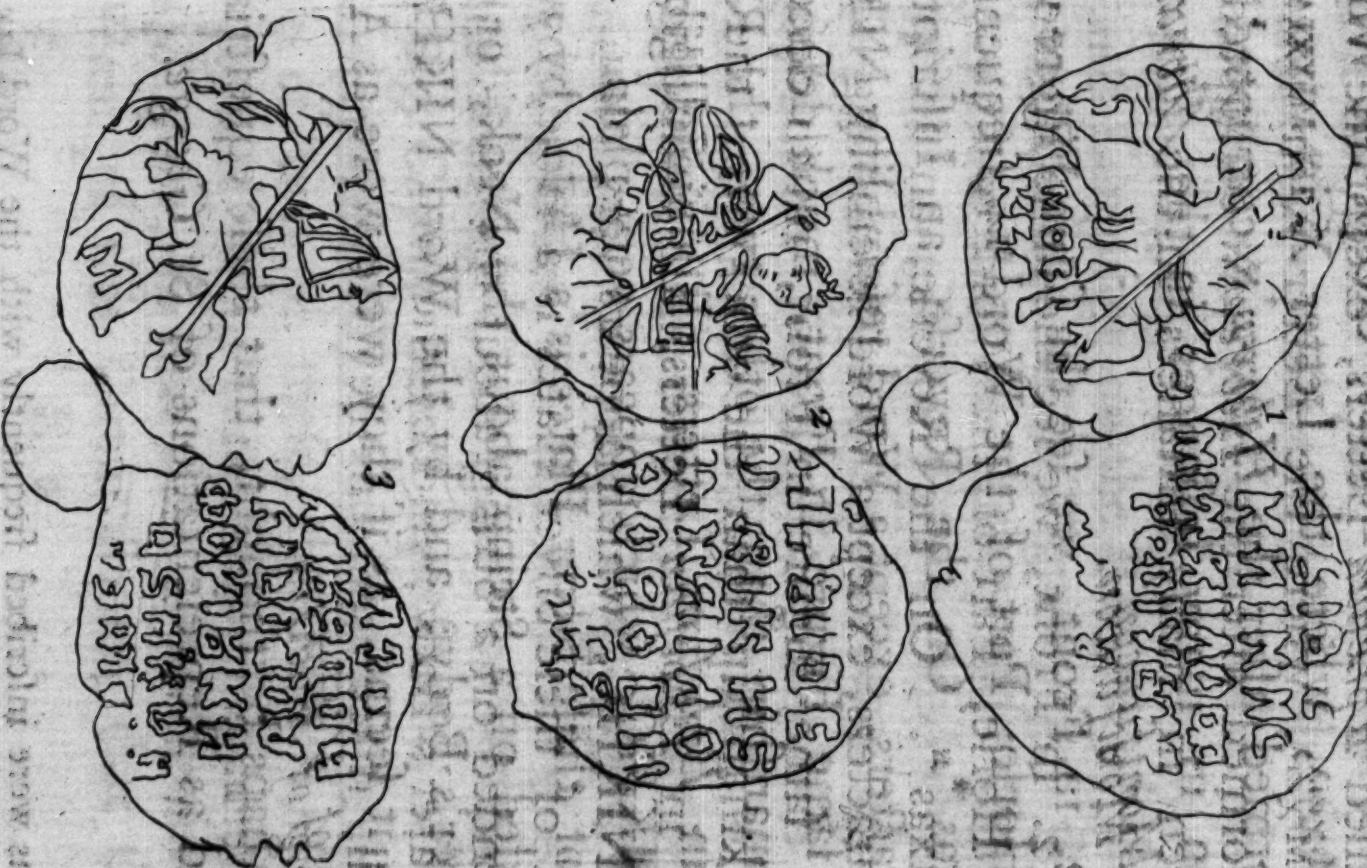
We have here seen the Sun under the Figure of a Horseman subduing the pestilent Effects of unwholesome Air, represented

\* *Agostini*, Dial. i. p. 18.

† See *Assmole*, out of *Ambrosius Morales Chron. Hispan.* p. 36.



represented by a Serpent; the Abraxas or Amulet marked with this Device is exhibited by *Monfaucon* out of the Collection of Sig. *Capello*. But if there be any Doubt about its being an Abraxas, or any Question about its Antiquity, the Author has added here three more, which are in his Possession, of the same Taste and Style, and of undoubted Genuineness and Antiquity, as may appear by the Characters on the Reverse.



E

They



They are small Pieces of Silver about the Size of a Silver Three-pence, much wore, and in many Respects defaced, being, as one may reasonably imagine, about 12 or 1300 Years old. On No. 1. in Front is seen a Horseman striking with a Spear at what we may suppose a Serpent, but is so defaced, that it is not easily distinguishable; under the Horse an Inscription not intelligible; on the Reverse an Inscription in Language and Character unknown, and what may be called *Ephesian* Letters, except the Words ΝΙΚΗC ΜΙΧΛΙΑ, <sup>ΙΕΥΗΣ ΜΙΧΛΙΑ</sup>, where the Letter X in ΜΙΧΛΙΑ, standing for A, is formed after the *Hebrew* & corrupted into X, as may be seen in many Instances in the *Abraxas Anubis*, Plate 152, *Montfaucon*.

On No. 2. in Front, we see the same Figure with an W, under the Horse, Part of the Word <sup>ΙΕΥΗΣ</sup> frequently seen on these *Abraxas* \*. On the Reverse, an Inscription in unknown Characters, except a Word resembling ΝΙΚΗC. On No. 3. the same Figure in Front, much defaced, and of worse Workmanship than the other two; the Reverse, an Inscription in *Ephesian* Letters, all unintelligible, except the Word ΝΙΚΗC, which appears very plain.

In each of these Silver Plates is a Hole, by which they were suspended on a String about the Neck, or other Part of the Wearer's Body; and by the Word ΝΙΚΗC, legible on them all, it seems, as if they were wore as Amulets for the obtaining of *Victory*.

It may perhaps be thought, that these equestrian Figures were designed as Representations of St. *George*. If that be granted,

\* The *Abraxas* were inscribed frequently with the Word <sup>ΙΕΥΗΣ</sup> for *Yehovah*, because as *Irenæus* tells us, *Iao cum quidam signum maiorum significat*. *Iren. lib. ii. c. 67.*



granted, it will also prove, that the Figure of St. *George* was used as an Amulet. But the Matter is quite otherwise, the equestrian Figure was an Hieroglyphic of the Sun, used by the antient *Basilidian Gnostics*, as appears from the Characters and barbarous Language of the Inscriptions, which are the same with the *Ephesian* Letters mentioned by *Clement Alexandrinus*, and the Jargon calculated to terrify the Vulgar, before taken notice of, out of *Irenæus* and *Jerom*. Whereas the first Time that we read of St. *George* as a Saint, is, if I mistake not, in *Procopius*, who lived in the Time of *Justinian*; and of his equestrian Figure, the first Mention is in *Nicephorus Gregoras*, who wrote under *Andronicus Senior* in the 14th Century. From whence it appears, that the Letters and Language on the Reverse of these Amulets prove them and the equestrian Figures upon them to be of a much higher Date than the History of St. *George*, at least than that of his equestrian Figure; and therefore the equestrian Figures seen upon them in Front, are not relative to St. *George*, but an Hieroglyphic of the Sun, used by the Gnostics in the early Ages of Christianity.

If it be objected, that there is no Serpent to be seen on these Representations; this might have happened by Omission in the Workman, or else wore away by Length of Time. This seeming Defect may be corrected from the Amulet of Sig. *Capello* before represented, where the Serpent is seen very distinctly: And even upon the Legend of the Reverse of two of these, the Letters  $\phi\phi$  are legible, which very probably were Part of the Word  $\phi\phi\phi$ , the *Greek* Word for a *Serpent*; so that there is no Reason to imagine from the Want of this Circumstance, that these Figures



might relate to any other Design than the Horseman slaying a Serpent; the very Attitude of the Figure speaks it.

It may be observed here, that under the Horse the Words MOOC KLA are legible, of which I cannot offer any Interpretation. All that I intend by the Mention of this Circumstance here, is to shew, that under the Horse, on the *Abraxas Taras* before-mentioned, p. 8. we see likewise the Word KΛΑ, which probably had some Relation to the Influences of the Sun; and which may be presumed to be signified by the Horse on this Amulet, as it was confessedly by that on the other, as appears by the Nimbus round the Head of the Rider.

This Abraxas was that which I am inclined to think was called *Peres*, in that Passage wherein St. Jerome mentions the different Sorts of these *Portentosa simulacra*, *Corax*, *Nipbus*, *Miles*, *Leo*, *Peres*, *Helios Bromius Pater* \*. For this Worship of *Mibras*, to which all these Figures belonged, was a *Persian* Culte; and as they consecrated a Horse to the Sun in token of its swift Motion, so the *Egyptian Gnostics* expressed it by the Hieroglyphic of a Horseman, which in their Language was *𐤀𐤓𐤁*, *Peres* or *Persa*, from whence the fabulous *Perseus*; it is from this Relation of Horses to the Sun, that we read of *Horses of the Sun* among the idolatrous Superstitions of the Kings of *Judah*, 2 Kings xxiii. 11.

As *Ephesian* Letters have been mentioned, it will not be amiss to shew what was meant by them. They were cer-

tain

\* Ante paucos annos propinquus vester Gracchus nobilitatem patriciam sonans nomine, cum praesefuram gereret urbanam, nonne specum Mibræ, Et omnia portentosa simulacra, quibus Corax, Nipbus, Miles, Leo, Peres, Helios Bromius Pater imitantur, subvertit, fregit, exulit. Hieron. Epist. ad Lætam.



tain arbitrary odd Characters inscribed on Amulets \*, or used in magical Operations to surprize and astonish the Vulgar, who were taught to believe, that they contained this Virtue in them, that whoever wore them, were sure of *Victory* in whatever Encounters they engaged. To this Purpose *Suidas* relates a Story, that when a *Milesian* at the *Olympic Games* wrestled with an *Ephesian*, he was not able to prevail over his Antagonist, because he had *Ephesian Letters* about his Neck; which as soon as the *Ephesian* was stripped of, he fell. How these Characters came to be called *Ephesian* is a Question that has produced many Conjectures, but nothing satisfactory, so they need not be recited.

Thus far we have seen the Activity of the Sun's Rays in dispersing the Vapours, and as it were *subduing* unwholesome Exhalations, represented by a Herleman striking with a Spear a Serpent, on the Hieroglyphic of the *Egyptians*, in the Mythology of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and on the Abraxas or Amulets of the *Basilidian Gnostics*; which last, as the whole Figure bears the Air of Conquest, wore that Device on their Amulets in Hopes of *obtaining Victory*.

We know not precisely when it was, that these *Gnostic* Impieties ceased, but this we are certain of, that though they were not used in the Height of their original Profaneness, yet we have very evident Traces of them in the ninth Century, as appears by the Laws against them in the Capitularies of *Charles* the Great before-mentioned. And in-

deed

\* *Andronides* γὰρ οὗ Πύθαγορος τὰ Εφεσια καλῶμενα γράμματα συμβόλων εἶναι φησὶ Clem. Alexandr. Strom. Lib. V.

† Εὐ Ολυμπία Μίλωνος καὶ Εφεσια παλαιῶν Μίλωνος μὴ δύνασθαι παλαιῶν δια τοὺς Εφεσι περὶ τῶ ἀσφαλῶν εἶναι τὰ Εφεσια γράμματα, φανερὸν δὲ γενομένον καὶ Ἀθανῶν αὐτὰς τριχούλα τοῦς Εφεσιων. *Suidas*, in VOC. Εφεσια. γε.



deed *Monfauton* goes farther, and fuppofes them to continue down to the later Ages of Chriftianity\*; which we fhall fee fully proved in the Sequel. For when Paganifm gave way and fled before the Gospel, the Superftition that arofe from the Worfhip of the Sun and Sabaical Culte did not entirely die away. It difappeared in a great Meafure as to its Externals, but kept its Ground confiderably in the Minds of Men who had long been ufed to expect Help and Protection from the heavenly Bodies, and were prejudiced in Favour of that eafy Way of obtaining it by wearing Amulets and Charms for that Purpofe.

It has been before obferved, that the *Bafilidian* Culte was a Complex of Heathenifm, Judaifm, and Chriftianity: From the two laft of which they adopted the Doctrine of Angels, to whom they afcribed the Creation, and confequently the Prefervation of the World; and for that Reafon addreffed themfelves to them, to avert all Danger, and blefs them with all Kinds of Happinefs and Profperity. When therefore the groffer Parts of Heathenifm, the Worfhip of the Sun, ceafed, the Worfhip of Angels, which was blended into the *Bafilidian* Culte with that of the Sun, ftill remained, upon Pretence, that Reverence to Angels was warranted by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. And as the S. S. mention *Michael* the Archangel contending with the Devil, they took this as a fufficient Authority for uſing that Device on their Amulets. Hence Gold Coins were ftamped with the Image of St. *Michael* ſlaying a Dragon, as we fee on ſome of the Coins of our *Henrys*, down to the Eighth of that Name; which were thence

\* . . . . . *Huijufmodi preſigie in omnibus ſere ſeculis Chriftianiſmi uſurpatæ ſunt.* Montf. Antiq. Expliq. P. 378.



thence called *Angels*, and wore as Amulets about People's Necks, as appears by the Hole in most of them, by which they were suspended; and not only Individuals, but Kingdoms also were from this Persuasion put under his Protection and Patronage; and military Orders instituted to his Honour in *Naples* and *France*, where, in the Preamble to the Patent of Institution of the Order of *St. Michael*, 1469, he is stiled *Monsieur St. Michael premier Chevalier*; in Memory of whose Prowess, they invoked his Assistance to enable them to triumph over their Enemies, as he conquered the Enemy of Mankind; and for the Purpose of conveying this Power, they wore on a Collar his Figure, which hung down on the Breast. We may hence see the Original of military Orders, which was no other than a Sodality of Men, who put themselves under the Protection of an Angel or Saint, by whose powerful Interposition they expected Victory over their Enemies.

Perhaps it may be said, that this Institution was founded on Christian Principles in Honour of an Angel acknowledged by Christians. It is granted that the Angel is acknowledged by Christians, but Christianity does not any where allow of the Worship of Angels, or the least Dependence on them, or any thing else for Protection and Help; this would be robbing God of his Honour, and Derogatory to his sole and absolute Dominion. So far from it, that we have seen *St. Paul* cautioning the first Christians against this very Delusion. So that, although the Angel be admitted to be received out of Judaism into Christianity, yet the Worship, or the Reliance on it for Protection and Assistance, is purely *Papistical*, founded in their Doctrine of the Power of Angels, which also laid the Foundation of another Error of the



the like Nature in the Church of *Rome*, as we shall see hereafter,

The Growth and Decay of Opinions proceed by imperceptible Degrees; therefore there is no certain Rule of determining when this Practice of Angel-Worship ceased. We may suppose it abated when the Laws were levelled against it, and Councils decreed against the monstrous Variety of Angels, whose Names were never heard of but in this whimsical Culte.

About the Time that those Impieties were discountenanced and forbid, the Church of *Rome* was beginning to innovate, and setting up Delusions instead of sound Doctrine. Every one knows the Disputes raised in the Eighth Century about the Doctrine of worshipping Saints and their Images. However when the *Basilidian* Superstition of consulting in Angels and expecting Help from them gave ground, the *Roman* Church found that a proper Time, to set up a new Doctrine of the same Tendency, but under another Name; for as the *Gnosticks* taught a Dependance on Angels, for Protection and Assistance in all the Affairs of Life, which was the Cause of multiplying the barbarous Names of them to a ridiculous Degree, so as to be forbid by Authority; the *Roman* Church took care to fill up that Vacancy in the Minds of weak Men, by introducing the *Worship of Saints, instead of Angels*, and teaching that the Saints had all Power of Protection and Defence of their Votaries, in the same Manner as the Angels were supposed to have had before. Thus, to use the Expression of the Author of the *Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg*, the Niches of the *Basilidians* just emptied of their idolatrous Angels, were soon filled with Saints of every Kind, and new Errors stept into



into the Place of those of Antiquity that had just been abolished.

This one would conceive to be the true original of Saint-Worship in the Church of Rome: And for these Reasons, *First*, because the Decay of the one and the Rise of the other, fall in about the same Period; *Secondly*, because the same Addressees that were made to Angels during the *Basilidian* Superstition, we see afterward transferred to Saints under the *Roman*; *Thirdly*, the same *Protection and Defence* that was expected from *Amulets* inscribed with the Names of *Angels*, was sought for from the *Reliques of Saints and their Images in the Church of Rome*; *Lastly*, all the Assistance, Prosperity, or Victory that a *Basilidian* could hope for from the Virtues and Influence of St. Michael, or any other Angel, inscribed on an Amulet, the *Roman* Bigot expected from the Image of St. Mauritius, or St. Sebastian, or St. George carried about him. From whence we may conclude with great Probability, that the *Roman* Saint-Worship was a *Succedaneum* to the *Basilidian* Worship of Angels, and their Doctrine of Amulets. If this Opinion should seem singular and novel, I would desire the Reader to look back on what *Gassarelli Curiositates inauditæ*, p. 111. has long since observed, that it was from the heathenish Practice of placing their Dii Averrunci by way of Talisman on their Ships that the Christians used their Saints for the same Purpose. *Quæ omnes figuræ Talismanicæ non tam ad malum vitandum, quam commodum aliquod adipiscendum erant comparatæ; eorum exemplo Christiani sanctorum imagines in navibus collocaverunt.* Now, if the Christians of the Romanish Communion put the Figure of their Saints on their Ships in Imitation of the Heathens, who used their Gods by way of

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Amulet



Amulet in the same Manner for the sake of Protection and Defence; we have all the Reason to think, that they used them also upon all other Occasions; and where the Heathens had recourse to their Amulets, in the same Case *they* applied themselves to their Saints. If the first be true, for which we have the Authority of a Romish Bigot, and the high Probability of the Thing itself, then the Presumption is very strong, which suggests that the Doctrine of *Roman* Saint-Worship and the Efficacy of Reliques was originally founded in the *Basilidian* Worship of Angels and the Superstition of Amulets. But however this may be, with Regard to the Reason of the Thing, it was in fact from a Persuasion exactly similar with the *Basilidian* Trust in their Angels and Amulets for Help and Deliverance, that the *Englisch* applied themselves to St. *George* as their Patron and Protector, and wore his Image.

As to the History of this Saint, nothing certain can be depended upon; some say he suffered in the Persecution under *Diocletian* in *Palestine*; some suppose him to be the same with *George* the *Arian*, who endeavouring to force himself into the See of *Alexandria*, in Opposition to *Abbasus*, lost his Life in the Attempt; and there seems to be some Foundation for this Opinion, seeing there was a Time when this *Arian George* was reckoned a Martyr, and had his Place in the *Roman* Martyrology, till Pope *Gelasius*, in a Synod at *Rome*, 494, struck him and some others off the List, because the Accounts of their Martyrdom *ab hæreticis perhibentur conscriptæ*. Thus far *Gratian* \*. There is also another Circumstance that seems to favour the Opinion that *George* the Martyr was the *Arian George*; and that

\* *Gratian. Concil. ad ann. 494.*



that is, that in an old *Saxon* Martyrology, which Mr. *Selden* believes by the Hand and Language to be about the Time of St. *Dunstan*, this *George*, whose Festival was then placed on the 23d of *April*, as at this Day, is said to have suffered under the Emperor *Datianus*. *Baronius* says the same of this *Arian George*, that he suffered under *Datianus* a *Persian King*\*, as appears from an antient MS. in the Vatican. Now as both agree in the Circumstance of suffering under *Datianus*, there is some Reason for that Opinion that the *Arian George* was the same with him whose Festival was placed on the 23d of *April*. Besides, as Mr. *Selden* supposes *Datianus* to be a Corruption of *Diocletianus*, and offers his Reasons; if Recourse be had to *Corruption*, it will not be improper to take notice, that the first Letter in the Word *Datianus* in the *Saxon* Martyrology is D, which in *Saxon* stands for *Th*; so that, instead of *Datianus*, the real Word will be *Thatianus*, (far enough from any Resemblance to *Diocletianus*;) but a very easy and natural Corruption of *Atbanasius*. So that the *George* of the *Saxon* Martyrology, whose Day is the 23d of *April*, will appear to suffer by means of *Atbanasius*, which will agree perfectly with the Story of the *Arian George*. But whether our St. *George* was the *Arian*, or whether he was a real Person or not, for that is a Matter not settled among the Learned †; it is however certain by very antient Testimonies, that his Memory was very early and very much regarded in the Fast;

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that

\* *Baron. ad Martyrol. Roman. 23 April.*

† *Plusieurs croient que il* (St. *George*) *n'a jamais été.* Godeau Hist. Eccles. Tom. II. sub an. 327. P. 172. *Stillington* fleet against *Goodwin*, P. 376. *Baron.* in 23 April. Martyrol. Roman. *Pictura illa S. Georgii qua effugitur eques armatus qui haste cuspidē Draconem interficit Symboli potius quam historię alicujus opinor, expressam esse imaginem.*



that they used to represent him on Horseback at the Time of *Andronicus Senior*, and before, we learn from the Historian *Nicephorus Gregoras*, who tells us, that one Night, when all the Guard was set, there was heard a great Neighing of Horses about the Palace, which when the Emperor sent to enquire the Reason of, the Messenger brought Word, that he heard no other neighing than what came from the Horse that *St. George* was painted upon near the Chapel of the Virgin Mother, by Paulus a famous antient Painter \*; and a little after it is said, that there was a Tradition that this same Horse had neighed before a Calamity that befel that City. Who this *Paulus* was, or when he lived, I cannot find, but as he is said to have painted this *πάλαι, antiently*, we may suppose it was no new Invention in his Time, which will carry us back probably into that Period, when the *Basilidian* Figures were in Use, and from whence this of *St. George* might have been imitated; for the greatest Advocates for the Church of *Rome* acknowledge, as we have seen above, the one, that *St. George* was no real Person; the other, that his Figure striking a Dragon with a Spear was to be thought rather symbolical, than any Part of his true History; and if it be supposed, that this equestrian Representation of him relates to his spiritual Conquest, as a Martyr and Soldier under the Banner of *Christ*; it has been observed already, that in the Expression of that Idea on the Medals of *Constantine* and *Majorianus*, and the Ensign of the Order of *St. Michael*, as also the Coins impressed with that Device, the Victor is always on Foot, treading on the Enemy of Mankind

\* . . . . . Ακτινος υἱὸν πάλαι η οἱ παλαιὰ τὰ ἱππικὰ τὰ γυμνασιακὰ ποιεῖ εἰς τὰς τοιαύτας ποδο τὰ εὐκτερίαι τῆς νικητορίας Στοιχείου — ἱπποὺς λεῖον τῶν ἐν τῷ ἀποχρηστικῷ καλῶντα Γεωργίου τὸ Χρῆμα μαρτυροῦντας εἰσάγειν Παύλου ἐκείνου ὁ τῶν ζωγράφων ἀγνός. Niceph. Gregoras, Hist. Lib. VIII.



Mankind under the Figure of a Serpent; so that as no Reason can be assigned from this Circumstance why he should be painted on Horseback, we must therefore look elsewhere for the Original of that Device.

We have already seen how the ancient *Egyptians*, *Per-  
sians*, and *Greeks* from them, expressed the Sun by an Hieroglyphic of a *Man on Horseback*; and its salutary Qualities in purifying the Air, by *slaying a Serpent*, that lies conquered under him. We have seen likewise, this same Figure adopted into the Religion of the *Basilidians*, who being originally *Egyptians*, among the other Hieroglyphics of their Country, with which they inscribed their Amulets, used also *that express Figure* which we now call *St. George* slaying a Dragon, and which they wore in Hope and Expectation of Victory. From these *Basilidian Gnostics* the *Romish Church*, when they set up Saint-Worship, borrowed the Figure of this Amulet, and called it *St. George*, because it carried the Air of Conquest, and might fitly represent the Triumphs of this supposed Martyr over the Enemy of Mankind. Whereas in Reality it was no more than an Amulet formed upon the Principles of the *Egyptian* Theology, as has been before largely observed. As therefore the Heathens hoped for Victory and other Shapes of Happiness from the supposed Virtues and Influences of these Amulets, thus inscribed with this *Egyptian* Hieroglyphic, so the Christians of the *Romish Church* hoped for Protection and Victory, by wearing this same *Figure appropriated to St. George*, who in Archbishop *Cbichely's* Constitution for the Observance of his Day, 1415, 3 Hen. V. is called *Patrono & Protectore Nationis Anglicæ, cujus intercessoris præsidio, ut indubitanter credimus . . . . .* & inter-  
ventu



ventu medium gentis Anglię armata militia, contra incursus hostiles bellorum tempore tuta reperitur, sed & cleri pugna Militaris in sacra Pacis otio, sub tanti Patroni suffragio celebriter roboratur. From whence it plainly appears that it was the common Opinion, that the English Nation were under the Tutelage and Protection of St. George with regard both to their temporal and spiritual Warfare: This being the Case, it is no wonder to find a military Sodality acting under the Persuasion of the Influences, and wearing the Figure of their mighty Protector, from whom, by so doing, they expected Help and Preservation, and Victory. Now if we turn our Eyes towards the Practice of Amulets among the Heathens or *Gnostics*, we shall find that this was the precise Reason at all Times, and among all Persuasions, for wearing them.

What the supposed Efficacy of wearing his Figure and Presence might be, we may gather from the many Advantages and Deliverances that were to attend even calling upon his Name; the old Saxon Martyrology, before mentioned under the 23d of April, introduces St. George making Intercession to *Christ*, that “whosoever should keep his Memory on Barth, that all Falshood, Hurt, Hunger, and Sicknefs should be far from his House, and that whosoever should call on his Name in any Danger by Sea or elsewhere, to him that he would be merciful;” thus expressed by an old English Poet.

*That there we falle in dilke Houf no Qualm in all the Yere,  
Ne gret Sekneffe, ne Hunger strong, that thereof ne be no Fere,  
And bofo in peril of Se to me bid his Bone,  
Ober in oher Stedes perilous, bele him thereof some.*

If

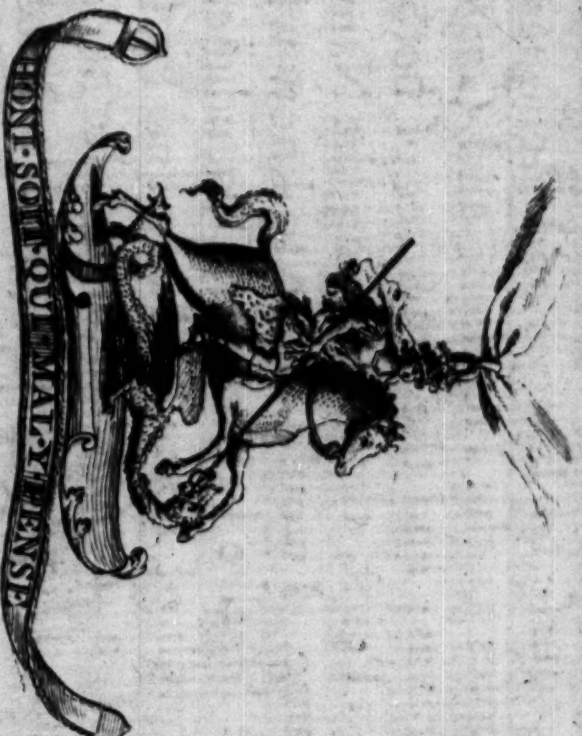


If therefore the keeping *his Festival* and calling on *his Name* were to be attended by such signal Protection, how much greater Blessings were they to expect from wearing his Image, and having as it were his Presence always at hand to defend them. And for the Justness of this Manner of Reasoning we may appeal to the Practice of the Church of *Rome* at present, who think their Ceremonies and Prayers much less effectual than the wearing a Crucifix, or carrying the Image or a Relique of some of their Saints about them.

It may perhaps be said, that the Use of the Figure of St. *George* was so far from being an Imitation of an Amulet or Abraxas, that it was no other than a Consequence of Saint-Worship in the *Romish* Church, and a Kind of Devotion paid to the Images of Saints for Defence and Protection. If this be granted, what will follow, but that the Church of *Rome* has recourse to Images and Reliques of Saints, for the same Purposes as the Heathens and *Gnostics* had to Amulets and Abraxas; and the Practices of both corresponded so exactly in this Point, that changing the Names, the Thing remained the same. I would desire to know what Difference there is in the Motive between a Dependance on a Patron Saint in the Church of *Rome* for Help and Preservation, and the Reliance of a *Basilidian* on an alexiteric Charm, inscribed with the Hieroglyphic and Name of the Sun, or *Moses*, or *Abraham*, or *Gabriel*? or why a Finger or a Hair of St. *Anthony*, wore by a Papist for supernatural Assistance, should be less an Amulet than an Abraxas of the *Gnostics*? I would go still farther, and ask what Difference there could be between a *Basilidian*, with the Abraxas of the Horse-man killing a Serpent hanging on his Neck, and a Papist, with St. *George* killing the Dragon hanging on his; and which,



which, for the better comparing them, are both here exhibited.



Now it is certain they both grew out of the same Kind of Superstition, a Reliance on the Help of supposed Powers in those Figures, and differed only in this, that the Heretics hoped for Preservation from the Amulet inscribed with the equestrian Figure of the Sun, and the Christians of the succeeding



succeeding Ages, purged indeed in their Opinion from the Drofs of Heathenism and Heresy, transferred their Dependence from heretical Objects to the Images of Christian Saints and their Reliques, altogether as impious, as help-  
less, and as inefficacious as the other.

From this Persuasion arose the Custom of painting the Saints on the Walls of Churches, as we see in the Instance of St. *George* on the Walls of the Virgin's Chapel at *Constantinople*; for this was the original Form of Image-Worship at that Time, that it produced such Disputes and Disorders in the eighth Century; and when this Error came to be established by Law, as in the second Council of *Nice*, embraced by the Weakness and Superstition of Mankind, and encouraged and recommended by the Craft and Management of the Church of *Rome*, they then proceeded to make *portable Saints*, such as might be able to assist their Votaries by their immediate Presence in the most imminent Dangers. Of this Sort was the Figure of St. *George*, the Subject of our present Enquiry.

The Resemblance between the equestrian Device of St. *George* and the *Basiliidian* Amulets before represented, both as to the Figure, and the Use they were applied to, which was to *protect*, *defend*, and *render* the Wearers of them *victorious* over their Enemies, being thus far suggested; we will proceed to consider what was meant and intended by the Use of this Figure in the Institution of the Order of St. *George*; and for this Purpose we shall have recourse to authentic Papers and original Instruments.

In the antient Forms of Admonition, (by which I understand those used before the Reform in this Order by *Henry VIII.*) when Knights-Subjects were invested, at put-  
ting



ting on the Collar, it was to be said as follows: *Vous porterez ce collier avec l'Image de St. George a l'accroissement de votre Honneur, &c. en signe de passer toutes choses prosperes ou aduerses, si que les ayant vaillamment vaincus vous pouvez en ceste vie obtenir l'Honneur & renom de noble & preux Chevalier, & apres, recevoir l'eternel guerdon de vos victorieux travaux* \* : So when Strangers were invested, at putting on the Collar of the Order, it was said, *Torquem hunc in collo deseres ad augmentum honoris & in signum quoque clarissimi Ordinis a te suscepti, cum imagine sanctissimi martyris & Christi militis Georgii, cujus fultus praesidio, hujus mundi prospera & aduersa sic pertransas, ut hostibus corporis & animae devictis, non modo temporalis militiae gloriam sed perennis Victoriae palmam recipere valeas, in signum ordinis, & augmentum tui honoris* † : So likewise, in the Instructions given the Sovereign's Ambassadors sent with the Habit and Ensigns of the Order to *Julian de Medicis*, Brother to Pope *Leo X.* the last Article is as follows: “ And when the said *J. (Julian)* shall be so apparelled with the Ornaments aforesaid, the said Sir *E. P.* shall put the Image of *St. George* about his Neck, and the Doctor shall say these Words: Imaginem gloriosissimi martyris *Georgii* hujus ordinis patroni in collo tuo deseras, cujus fultus praesidio hujus mundi prospera & aduersa sic pertransas, ut hostibus corporis & animae devictis, non modo temporalis militiae gloriam, sed perennis Victoriae palmam recipere valeas, &c. ‖.

So likewise, in the Instructions given on a like Embassy to *James V. of Scotland*, Garter is directed to say to the King,  
“ Take

\* *Vid. Asbmole*, Appendix, No. 36.

† *Vid. Asbmole*, No. 101.

‖ *Asbmole*, Appendix, No. 101.



“ Take ye this Collar with the Image of St. George Patron  
 “ of this Order about your Neck, by the *Help whereof* you  
 “ may the better pass through both the Prosperity and Ad-  
 “ versity of this World; so that your Enemies both of Bo-  
 “ dy and Soul may be overcome; ye then may receive not  
 “ only *Glory of temporal Chivalry*, but also the rejoicing of  
 “ *everlasting Victory*, in Sign and Token of this Order,  
 “ and Increase of your Honour \*.

We see from these Admonitions and Instructions, that  
 the Ensign of the Image of St. George was to be considered  
 by the Wearer of it as a *Protection and Defence, presidium,*  
*a powerful Help and Assistance against all Enemies, both of*  
*Soul and Body, and an Assurance of Victory in this World*  
*and that which is to come*; let us lay all this together: Here  
 is *Protection, Assistance against Enemies, and a Promise of*  
*Victory* to those that in this Order wear the Image of St.  
 George. Now if we compare this with what the most su-  
 perstitious Pagans hoped for from wearing their magical Te-  
 lems and Amulets, we shall find that, *mutatis mutandis*, it  
 was the very same; and that the Benefits which the Chri-  
 stians hoped for, by wearing the Image of St. George, were  
 the self same that the Heathens expected from their Amu-  
 lets and Abraxas; and therefore we may fairly conclude it  
 was used as an Amulet.

It is probable, that the equestrian Figure of St. George  
 was understood by the Eastern Nations also to have had  
 some telestematic Virtue in it, for *Leunclavius, de Rebus*  
*Turcic.* p. 130. tells us, “ That Sultan Mahomet threw down  
 “ a brazen equestrian Figure at *Constantinople*, which was  
 “ supposed to avert all pestilential Diseases, and preserve the

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“ City

\* *Assmole, Ibid.* No. 102.



“ City from Distemper; and that ever since it has suffered much by Plague and Pestilence.” Was this equestrian Figure a Statue of St. *George*? By the alexiteric Properties ascribed to it, one might be induced to think it was; especially as we have seen before, that St. *George* under this Representation had been long and well known in that City; and the Horse, though only a Picture, been supposed to have miraculously *neighed*. Now there cannot be any thing more natural than to suppose, that when the *Turkish Ottoman* Army made themselves Masters of *Constantinople*, that they destroyed *that Image*, which was looked upon as the *Paladium and Protector* of the Christians and their City.

The Reader perhaps may be surprized, that the Use of Charms and Amulets should be charged upon Christians so late as the Institution of the Order of St. *George* by *Edward III.* but it is well known, that in all Cases of Arms nothing was more common, *at that Time and after*, than to wear Charms for obtaining Victory; and to this Purpose we have a very authentic Instance in an Ordinance of the Duke of *Gloucester, Temp. Ric. II.* appointing the Laws of Duel, which at that Time was a Kind of Oath, whereby an accused Person appealed to God, that he would make appear his Innocence by prospering his Arms, and granting him Victory. One Part of the Oath, required from each Party preparing for Duel, was this: *Tu juras quod non habes . . . nec lapidem potentem, nec herbam, nec carmen, nec experimentum, nec characterem, nec ullam aliam incantationem juxta te, aut pro te, per quam spes quod facilius vincas tuum adversarium;* “ you shall swear, that you have not  
 “ any magical Stone, or Herb, or Charm, or Character, or  
 “ any other Kind of Enchantment, either about yourself,

“ or



“ or used by any one for you, by means of which you hope “ the more easily to overcome your Adversary \*.” THE Exception against wearing Amulets upon *this Occasion*, is a plain Proof, that in other Cases, it was not only *usual* but *permitted*. It is not absurd therefore to suppose, that the Image of St. George was wore in View of that Kind of Superstition, which was frequent among the Heathens when they depended upon their Amulets, which were consecrated under the Influences and stamped with the Figure of the Sun, or some other of the heavenly Bodies. For this Devotion being once established, it is easy to see how it was derived from Paganism into Christianity; and with the Alteration of the Object only, the Principle remaining the same, it became the Foundation of Saint-Worship, military Orders, Consecrations, Dedications, and those other Customs that grew out of a Belief, that the glorified Saints in Heaven had a Hand in the Conduct of human Affairs, so far at least as to avert Evil, or procure Good to their Votaries: And here I presume I need not call upon the Reader to observe, what a close Connexion there is, in *this Particular*, between Popery and Paganism.

As therefore we have seen that it was the same superstitious Principle that directed the Heathen *Basiliads* to their Amulets, and the Papists to the Images of their Saints, for *Assistance, Protection, and Victory*; we may hence, upon good Foundation, conclude, that the equestrian Image of St. George, *wore about the Neck of his Votary for supernatural Assurances, and Victory over spiritual and temporal Adversaries*, derived its Original from the same equestrian Figure that has been above shewn, represented on the *Abraxas*

\* *Speiman. Glossar. voce Campus.*



*braxas of the Basilidian Gnostics*; by the wearing of which Amulet suspended from their Neck on their Breast, they also hoped for Protection, Assistance and Victory, as appears from the Word NIKHS on the Reverse of them. And indeed how can we think otherwise, when we see the *same Device and Figure* wore in the *same Manner* for the *same Purposes*, both by the Heathens and Christians under Popery. I lay under Popery, because whatever was unjustifiable in this Practice, and contrary to the sound Doctrine of Religion, was owing in the main to the Error of the Times, and the Superstition of that Religion that prevailed not only in *England*, but was universally spread over all *Europe*; and St. George became the Patron of *England*, and his Image wore by the Knights of the Garter in consequence of that corrupt Doctrine, that taught the Worship of Saints, their Guidance of human Affairs, and the Efficacy of their Images and Reliques in procuring Good or averting Evil from those that wore them.

When these Abuses were reformed, and Popery with its Corruptions was drove out of this Land, the Ensigns also of this Order were stript of their Superstition; and what before was used for its alexiteric Virtue, as an Amulet, was now considered as no more than an *Ornament or Mark of Honour* conferred by the Sovereign on those Persons, who by their *Fortunes, Rank, or Merit* were chiefly entitled to this most honourable *Distinction*.



## Ensign of the G.A.R.T.E.R.

**W**E have thus seen the probable Original of the equestrian Figure of St. *George* appendent to the Collar of the Order of that Name; by which it seems to have been a Continuation of the same telefmatical Figure that was used by the Heathens and *Basilidians*, who wore precious Stones or Pieces of Silver consecrated under particular Constellations, and impressed with that same Device, by way of Amulet, as a Preservative against all Evil, and in Expectation of Victory whenever they were engaged with an Enemy. There remains a Word or two to be said of the *Ensign of the Garter* also, in this Institution.

It is to be confessed indeed, that the Bandage tied or fastened about the Leg, in the original Institution, was called *Jarritiere*, *Garterium*, in view of the Use it was put to, in binding the Leg like a *Garter*; but it is not to be doubted, but (as this was only the popular Name taken from an Use similar to that of a Garter) that it had also another *Signification*, and a *Symbolical Meaning*; and this, I think, can be proved from the Form of Words used in putting on the Garter on the Leg of the Knight, as we shall see hereafter.

From this popular Appellation of a Garter, those that looked no farther than Appearances, set about assigning Reasons,



Reasons, *how* and *why* a Garter was made one of the *Emblems* of this noble Order. From hence sprung that ridiculous Account of its Original being owing to the Countess of *Salisbury's* Garter, which the King picking up, and having a secret Passion for the Lady, did it the Honour of making it an Ensign of his new Order; others contend for the Garter of King *Edward's* own Queen, that was raised to this high Dignity. But not to mention the Indecorum (by Mr. *Camden's* Leave \*) of making such a trifling Piece of personal Gallantry the Foundation of a military Order, into which Foreigners of the highest Renown were to be admitted, and the Impropriety of building so august an Institution on so light a Circumstance; not to insist on this, it is to be observed, that Sir *John Froissart*, who lived in the Time of *Richard II.* speaking of this Order, gives no Hint relating to a *Lady's Garter*, and Dr. *Heylin* calls it an *idle Romance*, first published by *Polydore Virgil*, from common Fame.

The Account Mr. *Asmole* gives of it †, is, that King *Edward III.* for the Encouragement of military Virtue, did design a Restoration of King *Arthur's* round Table, and for that Purpose invited hither all the military Geniuses from Abroad to a Tournament; from whence he designed chusing the most worthy in the Exercise of Arms, and by this *Badge* as it were *binding them to his Interests*; which is, I think, what he means by *obliging them to himself*. A little after, he seems to make the Garter only an allegorical Symbol, whereby the Associates might be *obliged* and *tied* in a firm Bond of Friendship and Honour; and in this View it seems

\* *Nec vilis sane hæc videatur Origo, &c.* Camden in Attirebat.

† *Asmole*, P. 182.



to have been considered by *Camden* in *Berkshire*, and *Heylin*, as *a Bond of the most inward Society*, and a Badge of Unity and Concord \*. There is another Opinion mentioned by *Mr. Camden* out of a Book of the first Institution, wherein the Order is supposed to be only revived by *Edward III.* but invented by *Richard I.* in the Holy Wars, where he ordered leather Thongs to be bound about the Legs of certain Knights, to incite them to behave with Courage and Resolution, &c +.

We are told || of another Meaning out of *Stephanus Procatulus*, that in binding of the Leg with this Ensign, an Exhortation was given, that the Knights should not cowardly, by running away, betray the Valour and Renown which is ingrafted in Constancy and Magnanimity. We shall see hereafter upon what Foundation this Conjecture of its Use was built. Upon the whole *Mr. Selden* declares §, that in this Uncertainty of the Occasion of the Institution and the Signification of the *Garter*, our common Stories, that is, the several Reasons above assigned, give us but little Light; nor, says he, *know I whence wholly to clear it.* As therefore among all these Accounts, there is not one satisfactory enough to shew us the original Use and Intention of this Badge, or whether it was at first wore as an *Ornament* without any farther View, or as a *Symbol*; it needs no Apology for departing from received Opinions, and offering a Conjecture that perhaps may throw some farther Light on this Subject.

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\* *Asbmole*, 183. *Camden* in *Berkshire*.

+ *Camden*, *Ibid.*

|| *Asbmole*, p. 183.

§ *Selden*, Titles of Honour.



We have seen in the preceding Part of this Discourse, that the Figure of a Man on Horseback slaying a Serpent was used by the heathenish *Basilidians* as an Amulet for procuring Victory; and that the equestrian Image of St. *George* was probably imitated from thence, and wore with the same Intent and View at the first Institution of the Order of the Garter, at which Time that Kind of Superstition was very far from being extinct, as has been shewn; we will therefore consider the Garter in the same Light, and as a Part of that same telestematic Apparatus, that was supposed to afford Defence and Victory to those that put themselves under its Influences.

And here it may not be amiss to observe, that the Eastern Nations, from whom this Doctrine of Amulets was originally derived, called by the general Name of *Talisman* or *Charm* any Stone, Gem, Ring, or Plate of Metal, or any other Materials, that were inscribed with any Words, Figures, or Characters, and applied to any Part of the Body, as a Means of procuring the Favour of those Powers that preside over this World.

This Doctrine of Amulets among the Heathens took its Rise, as I conceive, from a Superstition of the Jews, founded on *Deut.* xi. 18, 19, 20, 21. where the *Israelites* were directed to observe the Law, and for the Purpose of remembering that Obligation it was commanded, “ *to bind these Words for a Sign on thy Hand, and as Frontlets between thy Eyes, and thou shalt write them on the Posts of thy House, and on thy Gates,*” that their Days might be multiplied, and other Blessings might attend them and their Children.

But in Proceſs of Time the Blessings, that were promised to attend the due Observance of these Ceremonies, were understood



understood in the most extended Sense, so that *the binding on their Hands and their Forehead* came to be considered not only as a Condition productive of positive Good, but also as a *Preservative against all Kinds of Evil whatever*; and in this View it was abused by the Jews into a downright Charm, which they called a *Phylactery*, <sup>Φυλακτήριον</sup>\*, a *Preservative*, from its supposed Efficacy *to keep and preserve* those that wore it. These *Phylacteries* were narrow Cuts of Parchment, inscribed with such Passages of SS. as commanded them to be *bound on their Hands*, &c. Thus we see that what was at first designed only as a *Memorial*, became afterwards to be corrupted by the Jews after the Captivity into a *Ligature* or Charm against Fascination, Diseases, or the *Malus Genius*; this I take to be the Original of Ligatures as Charms.

But besides these *Ligatures* bound on different Parts of the Body, there was another Sort of *Annulet* suspended from the Neck on the Breast, and which the *Etruscans* called the *Bulla*, which was a little Ball of Gold, or other Materials, hung over their Necks, in which were supposed to be contained *some Preservatives against Envy*†. This Custom of wearing the *Bulla* round the Neck among the *Etruscans*, who were an oriental Colony, I conceive to be an Imitation of a Practice among the *Egyptians*, where the Chief Justice wore the Figure of *Truth* suspended by a golden Chain from his Neck on his Breast‡; this seems to have been designed by that wise Legislature to be an Intimation and Direction always in his Sight, *to act with Truth and Justice in his De-*

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crees

\* See Dr. Hammond on Matt. xxiii. 5. *Ligabunt Horæ Hebraicæ.*

† *Inclusis intra Bullam remediis quæ crederent adversus invidiam valentissima.* Macrobi. Sat. Lib. II.

‡ Diodor. Sicul. Lib. I.



*crees*, and a *Kind of Preservative against false Judgments*: Perhaps the Collar of SS. wore by our Chief Justices, might originally have had some such Signification. This Practice however was not originally of the Growth of *Egypt*, but seems to be a fair Copy of the *Urim and Thummim* among the *Israelites*, which was wore by *Aaron* on his *Breastplate* when he went in before the Lord, to bear the Judgment of the Children of *Israel* on his Heart, *Exod. xxviii. 30.* It is to be observed, that what the *Israelites* called *Thummim*, implying the Integrity that *Aaron* was required to use in his judicial Decrees, the *Egyptians* represented by the Figure of *Truth*, which was set with precious Stones, in the like Manner as we read of the *Urim* and *Thummim*, and wore on the same Part, and upon the same Occasion, both by one and the other. For these Reasons therefore it is very probable, that the *Egyptians* copied this Usage from the *Hebrews*; and as among both these People, these *Insignia* carried the Remembrances of *Amulets* or *Preservatives*, accommodated to the Cases in which they were used, so from their Example the *Etruscans*, an Eastern Colony, brought into the West this Custom of hanging the *Bulla* as an Amulet round the Neck, in which were inclosed certain Preservatives against particular Evils. This I conceive to be the Original of wearing Amulets round the Neck.

But the Use of this *Bulla* among the *Etruscans* was more general, it was wore by the *Athletes* and *Gladiators* both on their Neck and Arms, not as a Reward of Victory in Imitation of the *Romans*, in their Triumphs, as *Montfaucon* imagines, *Tom. III. p. 268.* but as an *Amulet*, or *Preservative* against an Enemy, or as a Means of procuring Victory, as seems to appear from the famous Statue of an *Etruscan* Wrestler, whose



whose Neck and left Arm we see tied round with *Bulle*, and the left Arm of the Gladiator *Baro*, *Montf.* Plate 154, 157; for that Amulets were supposed to have this Efficacy appears from *Lucian in navigio*, where one is introduced wishing for such a Ring as would preserve his Body in *Health and Strength, and make it invulnerable* \*.

We may observe as we pass, that Collars, both those used in *Orders*, and others by way of Ornament, were most probably the Remains of that Custom of wearing Amulets and Charms round the Necks as we have seen in the Case of the *Ephesian* in *Suidas*, and on the Neck of the famous Statue of the dying Gladiator, which seems to be rather an Amulet, as that of the *Ephesian*, than a Reward of Victory, as *Montfaucon* conjectures.

But besides the common Way of wearing Amulets hung over the Neck, or *Ligatures* bound round different Parts of the Body, *St. Augustin*, in his Epistle to *Possidius*, mentions a very particular Custom of wearing them in their *Ears, not as an Ornament to please Men, but as a Token of that Superstition which is the Service of the Devil* †. It is to be observed, that *St. Augustin* here calls these Amulets *ligaturæ*, being the Latin Term for the *περικελευαῖα*, or *περικελευαῖα* of the *Greeks*, among whom those Words signified any *Ligatures* or *Bindings*, and also *Charms*, from their being bound round any Part of the Body. Thus the *Ephesian*, before mentioned out of *Suidas*, wore his Charm, *ἐν αὐτοῦ τῷ λαιῷ*, on his Neck, or in *talo*, his Heel, as some translate

\* Βαλάντας Εἰς τὸν δεξιὸν τῖνας δακτύλους τῶν δυνάμεων, ἐν αὐτῷ αὐτῷ ἐκδοῦναι καὶ ὑπάρχοντες τοῖς κοῖται καὶ ἀργείοι καὶ ἀπαθῆναι. *Lucian in Navigio.*

† Exeranda autem Superstitio ligaturarum, in quibus etiam inanes virorum, in summis ex una parte auriculis suspensæ deputantur, non ad placendum hominibus, sed ad serviendum Demonibus adhibetur. *Augustin, Possidio. Epist. 73.*



state or rank; and in one of St. Chrysostom's Homilies to the People of Antioch, he complains of that intolerable Superstition that prevailed among them of tying the Figure of Alexander as a Charm to their Heads or Feet \*. The Use I would make of these Instances is to shew, that Amulets were tied not only to the Neck, but also to any other Part of the Body, corpori alligatas, vel collo suspensas ad amolienda maleficia, as Chifflet says †.

These Considerations being premised, I cannot help looking upon the Garter at its first Institution in some such Light, as an Amulet bound about the Leg, as in the other Instances they were tied to other Parts of the Body; and of this Sort I conceive those Things to be, that have been mentioned to have been bound by Richard I. about the Legs of some of his Companions in the holy Wars, whereby they were to be inspired with Courage, and the Virtue and Fortitude of their Minds might spring up and appear more resolute and vigorous ‥. If these Things be considered as so many Rewards, like the Roman Crowns that were distributed among the Soldiers for particular gallant Actions, as the Author of this Account cited by Camden supposes, I doubt they would not have great Effect, so as his irritamentis excussa recordia, virtus animi fortitudoque pectoris fervidior exsurgere atque exiliret; which are the Words of the Author mentioned by Camden and Selden for this Opinion. But if

\* Τὸ αὐτὸς εἶπον καὶ τοῖς ἐπὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐπειτα τοῖς καὶ νομισματικὰ γράμματα Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνα, καὶ τοῖς ἀποστολικοῖς ἐπιστολικοῖς; quid vero dixeret aliquis de his qui carminibus & ligaturis utuntur &c de circumligantibus aurea Alexandri Macedonis numismata capiti vel pedibus. Chrysostomi ad Illuminandos Catachets Secunda, Edit. Monsaun, Paris, 1724.

† Chiffletius in Macar. Apisloph. P. 137.

‡ Selden, Titles of Honour, p. 792. and Asmole, in loc.



if they be considered as so many *Ligatures* or *Charms*, then indeed nothing could answer this Purpose better, or inspire their Courage more effectually, than the Persuasion, that by Virtue of this Charm on the Leg they should be guarded from Danger, and assisted by the Concurrence of a superior Power.

That the Garter was considered at the first Institution in the Nature of an Amulet will appear, I conceive, from the Words of the Instructions given to the Ambassadors that were sent to invest *Julian*, Brother to Pope *Leo X.* with the Ensigns of the Order. “ At putting on the Garter about his Leg, the Doctor was to say audibly these Words:” *Ad Laudem & Honorem summi atque omnipotentis Dei, intemeratae Virginis & matris suae Mariae, ac gloriosissimi Georgii hujus Ordinis Patroni, circumcinge tibiam tuam hoc Garterio, ut possis in isto Bello firmiùs stare, & fortius vincere, in signum Ordinis & augmentum Honoris tui\*.*

Upon which we may remark, that the Garter was to be looked on by the Knights as a Token of the Protection of God, the Virgin *Mary*, and St. *George*, whereby they should be enabled to stand their Ground, and conquer in Battle; circumcinge tibiam tuam hoc Garterio, ut possis in isto Bello, firmiùs stare, & fortius vincere; from whence it appears, that these military Virtues of standing their Ground and conquering their Enemies, were to be accounted as Effects of the Garter, with which the Leg was bound, in Honour of God, the holy Virgin, and St. *George*; ut possis seems to imply, as if this Ability arose from the Influences attending, and the Powers conveyed by this Garter. It is to be remarked, that upon these Words, ut possis firmiùs stare, that

\* *Amulet*, Appendix, No. 101.



that Opinion of *Steph. Præcatus* was founded, which supposed the Garter tied round the Leg was an Intimation to the Knights *not to run away*. *Ἰαυδῶς, ὅτι οὐ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστι* These Ligatures that were thus tied about different Parts of the Body, as Amulets, were often inscribed with some Words implying the Assistance that was hoped for from them, as *Φυλάσσε, διαφυλάξῃς, ὅς μὴ χαρῶν ναι νικῶν, keep me, preserve me, give me Favour and Victory*, with many others of the same Kind, which may be seen in *Montfaucon's Abraxas* \*. These Inscriptions were called, in the different Languages of those that used them, *δέξια, ἀναγιστῆς, Carmina*, whence *Charms, Spells, and Mantras*. Of this Sort perhaps the Inscription *Honi soit qui mal y pense* might be; of which we know of no other Interpretation or Meaning, than that popular weak one relative to the Garter of the Countess of *Salisbury*, and rendered *Evil to him that Evil thinks*.

But as the Cause to which this relates is generally supposed to be fabulous, the common Acceptation cannot be what was originally intended by it. As therefore the Ensign of the *George* has been shewn with great Probability, to have been copied from an Amulet of the Heathen *Gnostics*, as to its Figure and Use; and as the Garter seems to have in it something of the Nature of the *telesmatical Ligatures*, we may infer with some Reason, that the *Inscription* also had some Reference to the same Persuasion. If the Garter therefore be considered as a *τελεσμάτιον*, or *Ligature*, may not the Inscription *Honi soit qui mal y pense* be rendered *Shame and Confusion to him that designs any Evil against the Wearer of it? May all ill Designs against him be retorted upon the Author*. This Kind of Imprecation

\* *Iao, qui dat fugam malorum significat. Iren. supra.*



Imprecation was such a Part of natural Justice, that it even became a Maxim in all Countries; *Let his Travel come upon his own Head, and his Wickedness fall upon his own Fate, saith David* \*. In a Sense like this, allowing only for the different Circumstances, and Occasion of using it, which was here in the Matter of Chivalry and martial Exploits, we may understand *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, as the Legend of a *Ligature* fastened to the Leg, by which the Knight was to be preserved unhurt; the Evil in Battle designed against him be drove back on his Adversary; and he himself enabled, firmiter stare & fortiter vincere, to carry Victory wheresoever he went.

I do not know whether it may be necessary to observe, that the Phrase *penser mal*, besides its natural Signification of *thinking Evil*, implies also in many Languages, an evil Intention, Contrivance, or Design of an Enemy. *Joseph* (Gen. l. 20.) tells his Brethren, *as for you, you thought Evil against me*, rendered by the French Translators *vous avies pense mal contre moi*; but the original Word מַחֲשָׁבָה, signifies also *machinari*, to contrive, or devise Evil, and accordingly the *Septuagint* renders it by ἐκνευραδὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ πονηρὰ. So that it appears hence, that the Phrase *penser mal* in the Inscription of the Garter, may with Reason be supposed to relate to the hurtful Contrivances of an Adversary or Enemy, that are here imprecated back on himself.

I offer this only as a Conjecture, without laying any farther Weight upon it; and as such, I propose it to the Enquiry of others, who, if they approve not of it, may perhaps from hence take the Hint, and cast about for an Interpretation more to their own Satisfaction and the Information of the Public.

\* *Psal. vii. 16. In capite vestro isthuc quidam.* Plant. in Poenulo.



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